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S E R M O N S
T O
Y O U N G M E N.

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to His MAJESTY.

VOLUME THE THIRD.

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*He answered, Master, all these command-
ments have I observed from MY YOUTH.
Then Jesus beholding him, LOVED him.*

Mark x. 20, 21.

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S E R M O N XIV.

On Duelling.

M A T T. v. 39.

But I say unto you, That ye resist not evil.

THAT the Christian religion should have met with opposition appears nothing extraordinary, when we consider the pride and the prejudice, the passions and the vices of mankind: but that any one should have been hardy enough professedly to attack its MORALITY, may well seem strange, considering the purity and perfection, the benign tendency and social excellence of that Morality. Indeed, it is upon this very bottom, that a hardy veteran * in the cause of infidelity hath grounded his heavy charge: the morals of Jesus Christ,—palpably beyond the reach of censure,—are therefore “too good,” “too refined;” incompatible with the weakness, unattainable by the powers of imperfect human nature.—An objection as false as it is frivolous; calculated no less to encourage

* Chubb.

the indolence and depravity, than to repress all the noble aspirations of the soul after the highest attainments in virtue.

Amongst the proofs of the impracticability of the Christian morals urged by this clumsy combatant, is that doctrine of "Non-resistance of injuries" inculcated by our Saviour in the text: a doctrine certainly, of the greatest utility, both to individuals, and to society; as easy for the man of true Christian principles to perform, as it will ever be found delightful and satisfactory in the performance. Indeed, if determined to indulge their passions, to oppose no barrier to their pride or malice, their lust or revenge, there is no wonder that men think not only this, but every other precept of Christian truth severe, and are fond to fancy and to represent them as impracticable. But hence no fair judgment of the case can be formed: we must learn it, as indeed we only can learn it, from those, who, solicitous to subdue their evil lusts and passions, have entered into the combat with resolution and sincerity; desirous to overcome, after their

great Master's example, and fixed, through his grace, to persevere unto the end. When men like these declare the precepts of Christ beyond their attainment, his laws too refined, and his morals too sublime for practice, Their testimony, doubtless, will deserve to be treated with respect and deference. But when the enemy of the Christian faith, hunting for plausible objections to support his cause; when the man of the world, wedded to his passions, and centered in himself; when objectors like these arraign the morals of Christ, as too exalted and pure, we wonder not at the objection; we readily grant its full weight and force, with respect to them.

Were it otherwise,—to come to a case in point,—could a practice so impious and absurd in itself, and so directly opposite to the whole spirit and genius of the Gospel, as that of **DUELLING**, have ever been known in a Christian land?—No man can doubt that this barbarous brutality is forbidden by the laws of Christ; of Him, who hath commanded *that we resist not* : and no man can have hardi-

ness enough to avow that the precept is in this respect impracticable ; for who will assert that DUELLING is necessary ? So far from it, we dare to assert that the custom, in every view of it, is unmanly, irrational, sinful : as despicable, for the most part, in its CAUSES, as it is dreadful and destructive in its CONSEQUENCES.

I. Yes, my young friends, Develop the real CAUSES, discover the true sources of DUELLING, and you will perceive them to be as despicable, as the practice itself is criminal. True, you will hear much from the defenders of this Gothic custom, of Honour, of Reputation, of Satisfaction*, and other high-sounding words ; which, when reduced to their proper import, will be found to mean nothing less in the vocabulary of these gentlemen, than what they really imply. For that Honour, for instance, of which we hear so much, and see so little amongst characters of this kind, is so far from countenancing, that it peculiarly condemns the practice. Honour, as a Principle, is the refinement of virtue † ; as an

* See Anecdote 10th.

† See the Anecdotes, and Delany's sermons, vol. ii. p. 260.

End, it is the splendor of reputation, the reward of such virtue: and the true man of honour is he, who, from the native excellence and real dignity of justice, goodness and truth, is led to act at all times consistently with them: ever reverencing his conscience and his character, and solicitous to fill up the great, the worthy part, far above the narrow restraint and coercion of the laws, or the fallible testimony of mere human judgment*. And can it be supposed that a principle like this can ever allow, can ever justify the hazarding our own, or taking away the life of a brother, for a slight, nay for the greatest affront imaginable?—Can it be supposed that a principle like this can ever give rise to Duels, or attain its great end and reward, a splendid reputation, in consequence of them? They must be strange and perverse estimators of human actions, who can either believe the one, or bestow the other.

In the romantic ages of Chivalry, when men's brains were heated with wild and fan-

* See Cicero de Officiis.

tastic notions of bravery and honour, it is possible that some entered the lists, on what appeared to them the true and high principles of generosity and virtue. But it would be no less easy to shew the folly and falshood of those principles, than it is palpable to observe, that they have no influence in modern times. Principles far different, and which can by no means claim a thousandth part even of their worth, now place the weapons of death in the hand of the duellist, and call him forth in horrible opposition to his friend, and his brother! Furious passion, and unforgiving pride, here unite to give the sudden challenge! There, wine or woman, or, in plainer words, drunkenness and lust, draw the destructive sword. In other cases, the demon of Gaming * brings this fatal evil in its rear, after other mischiefs, and finishes the ruin of fortune with the loss of life. Notable causes all! and such as must necessarily put the Soul in a fit condition to appear before the tribunal of God, if discharged from the Body in the hazardous, the impious contest!

* See vol. ii. Sermon on Gaming.

Virtue, my young friends, is consistent, is uniform. Founded upon the immoveable basis of reverence to the Deity, and dependance upon Him, it will never dare to enter deliberately upon actions, which it is conscious that Deity must and will disapprove. And therefore, we may lay it down as an infallible truth, that the man of real virtue will never draw his sword on a fellow-creature, or dare him to the lists of death ; will never give or accept the challenge, or oppose his weapon to a human heart, except in self-defence. And if the Causes of Duelling, just mentioned, be for the most part such as I have specified ; if this detestable practice generally arises from worthless and criminal motives ; we see still further, that the truly good man, the man of strict and real honour, as he will never give occasion for, so can he never have any necessity to engage in desperate, deliberate, single combat !

A practice, how shocking to the imagination ! how opposite to all the principles of reason, religion, and humanity ! Two fellow-

creatures, frail, fallible, short-lived mortals, endued with reason and reflection, and taught by religion as well as by nature to consider each other as brethren, as friends, as united by the most tender and social ties;—two Men, instigated by the meanest passions, with revenge and guilt boiling in their hearts, preparing by the pistol or the sword, to finish each other's short and precarious existence; and to plunge, the one with all his vices blossoming upon him, into awful futurity; the other, to drag the miserable remains of life, haunted with the distracting consciousness of his brother's, his friend's, perhaps his once dearest friend's † murder

† This is well expressed by an elegant poet.
 Panthus and Euclio, link'd by friendship's tie,
 Liv'd each for each, as each for each would die;
 Like objects pleas'd them, and like objects pain'd;
 'Twas but one soul that in two bodies reign'd.
 One night, as usual 'twas their nights to pass,
 They ply'd the chearful but still temp'rate glass;
 When lo! a doubt is rais'd about a word;
 A doubt that must be ended by the sword.
 One falls a victim,—mark, O man, thy shame—
 Because their glossaries were not the same!

See Stillingfleet's Essay on Conversation.

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upon his soul ! Can this be Honour ? and can reputation ever accompany a deed like this ! Alas, were it possible, what reputation, what worldly pomp or praise could ever be availing to calm the sorrows of a soul, stained with the guilt of such blood !

But, mistake it not, my young friends : as Honour bears no part in such actions, so real Reputation never attends them. Look round the world and see, whether the Duellist is the man of estimation : Search and examine, whether he, who fears not on all occasions to hurl defiance to mankind, and to dare them to the point of his sword, is ranked amongst the characters of general respect ? No, rather you will find him an object of general detestation ; nor would you wish to be connected in social intercourse with him, whose sword has already reeked with the life's blood of his Friend, and who dares to avow and glory in a deed, the very relation whereof chills the heart of the truly virtuous man ! Indeed, the frivolous maxims of a neighbouring nation, from whence we are too fond of

importing foibles and follies, have gone so far as to sanctify this enormous evil: and, not yet sufficiently purged by manly reason and genuine Christianity, from the wild errors of rude and gothic barbarism, they with their usual levity, can even approve the Duellist *, and represent Murder as a characteristic of honour. But the maxims of no nation, however wise and respectable, can alter the true nature of things; no maxims can ever justify inhumanity in feeble mortals; passion, pride, and the lust of revenge in the disciples of Jesus Christ.

2. Supposing this however to be possible; granting that the *Causes* of Duels might sometimes be justified, and that there were cases in which a man could no otherwise vindicate his honour, and defend his reputation, than (horrible expedient!) by the pistol or

* It is no uncommon thing in France to recommend a gentleman, as peculiarly worthy your friendship and favourable notice, because "*He has killed his Man!*" We must however do justice to the laws of France. Henry IV. though too favourable to the practice, discountenanced it by his laws; and the edict against Duelling was one of the greatest glories of Lewis XIV's reign.

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the sword; yet, when reflection turns a moment on the CONSEQUENCES, every appearance of justification must immediately vanish.

With respect to Himself, the Duellist has but two dreadful alternatives before him; either to perish by the hand of his antagonist, or to incur the fearful guilt of that antagonist's blood! The former how irremediably fatal! The latter, how melancholy a corrosive of all the future peace and comfort of life! Oh, my young friends, when you consider the awful greatness of Eternity, the sublime and self-annihilating laws of Him, who is the Lord of that Eternity; when you consider the terms upon which you hold that existence which He has given you, the tremendous sanctions by which He hath fenced, as it were, the sacred human life*; when you consider that no laws, human or divine, allow self-revenge, or ever consent to put into man's hand so dangerous an instrument as that of private retaliation of injuries; You will shudder at the consequences of Duel-

* See Genesis, Chap. ix. ver. 5, 6, &c.

ling, as they respect Yourself; and reply, in that case, like the celebrated Patriarch on another, “ *How can I do this great wickedness and sin against my God, against my conscience, against society, against reason, against humanity, against every hope of present and future happiness !*”

But we live not for Ourselves. Can the Duellist then, in the fury of his passions, or the bitterness of his revenge, overlook and totally disregard the terrible consequences of this desperate deed to those, with whom he is connected by the tenderest ties ? Perhaps he lives the sole hope and stay of some ancient and venerable House; and, after all the labour and anxiety of youthful education is past, is advancing on the great theatre of the world, the delight of his friends, and the solicitous expectation of his affectionate parents; who in the decline of life see with transport their youth renewed, and the hopes and honour of their family flourishing in their beloved son ! And canst thou suppose, oh young man, that no debt, on thy part, is due to these

parents, these friends? Canst thou suppose that the disposal of thy life is with thyself only, and that these have no claim upon thee? —I appeal at present only to thy natural affections: I call thy filial love, thy gratitude, thy tenderness, to the trial: Consult with these, and thou wilt never dare to hazard thy sacred life; and in one fatal moment to deprive thy parents of a son, thy family of a support, thy friends of a benefactor!

But dearer, tenderer ties still remain, to twine about the heart, to touch it with the keenest sensibility, and to preserve it from the seducing calls of false honour and romantic bravery. If thou wilt needs engage in the desperate Duel, See, on one side,—to unnerve thy wretched arm—Honour, reason, humanity, religion, disavowing the deed. And from what source then shall Courage spring? And, on the other side, see the beloved and faithful partner of thy bed, with streaming eyes, and anguish too great for utterance, pointing to the little pledges of your mutual affection, and with dumb but expressive ora-

tory, bewailing her widowed, and their orphan state ! Think not the melting softness, which on that sight, on these reflections, must steal upon thy soul ; think it not any derogation to thy honour as a man : It is a noble proof of right, of genuine feeling, and deserves to be cherished, to be encouraged, more if possible, than the black and malignant passions brooding in the breast, and instigating to murder and revenge, deserve to be repressed, subdued, and execrated !

Surely no man, on the slightest review of *Consequences* like these, would so far disclaim his reason, as to rush upon a deed, which every law, civil and sacred, condemns ; which can admit of no justification, no indulgence ; which must either involve his soul in the horrid guilt of murder, subject him to exile or imprisonment ; to wander like the first shedder of a brother's blood, a wretched fugitive over the earth ; or to incur the danger of an ignominious death from the impartial sentence of the rigid law. Or, more fatal still, must

dismiss him into the tremendous presence of an Eternal Judge, under the immediate guilt of transgressing one of his strongest, plainest commands, and for ever precluded from the possibility of repentance!

How astonishing to think, that a practice thus pregnant with mischiefs should ever have prevailed amongst mankind! In some measure to account for it, many date its origin from those dark and barbarous ages, when the true principles of government were neither known or established; when legal redress for injuries was not easily to be obtained; and when too we may add, romantic ideas of courage and virtue prevailed, and the solid grounds of honour or religion were little understood. While others trace the dreadful practice up to the days of that first murderer above referred to; and conceive it cotemporary with the vices and corrupt passions of our kind. Those vices and passions, no doubt, are the genuine source of this destructive evil: but we must, with equal certainty, refer to the Gothic ages, for the regular establishment of the barbarous

custom *: A custom, which all the refinements of modern government, manners and religion have not been sufficient to explode; which surely it would be the glory of a prince to explode; and one happy step towards which, as a secondary means at least, would be the abolition of that savage fashion—another vile fruit of the Gothic tree;—"the appearing with an instrument of death in civil and social intercourse." Seems it not strange, and most unpleasing to thought, that a weapon of vengeance must be worn on the thigh of him, who converses only with fellow-men, with countrymen, and with Christians?—Seems it not of all absurdities the most absurd, that courts, and meetings of the most civilized sort, demand the ungraceful appendage of a sword; and proclaim that self-defence is necessary even there?—When will the days arrive, that awakened to just reflection, men will divest themselves of prejudices riveted by time; and abjure customs,

* See Delany's Sermons, Vol. iii. p. 252. Sully's Memoirs, Vol. ii. and Index, under the article, *Duels*.

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which have nothing but barbarous antiquity to plead in their cause * ?

To these prejudices and these customs, my young friends, it is to be feared, you must continue to comply with the rest of mankind ; and so long as they are not palpably immoral, an easy compliance is best. But for the practice which we have been decrying, when you consider its Causes, and its Consequences, when you consider its contrariety to the Laws of your nature, your country †, and your God ; You

* When matters become *ridiculous*, they often fall of themselves to the ground ; it was therefore reasonable to have thought, that the evil complained of would have been removed, and the practice of wearing swords have been entirely dropped, from the time that “ physicians were seen entering the chambers of the sick, with those formidable weapons by their side !” Can a more ridiculous absurdity be fancied ! except it be that of our modern fine gentlemen, who with monstrous and fearful *Hangers*, now parade the streets, and appear with them, in all morning assemblies at least.

† Gentlemen of the army, who often so far mistake their duty, as to think themselves obliged to engage in Duels, are of all others the least justifiable in the practice ; since, not to speak of the peculiar right which their country has in their lives, the articles of war are express against the practice. For there it is enjoined, “ That no officer or soldier shall

will no more dare to give or accept a challenge, than you will dare to commit the most flagrant and atrocious enormity. And this, not because you are deficient either in courage or in honour : but on the very contrary account ; because you are a man of true Courage, fearing God and reverencing his laws : a man of true honour, cultivating virtue in its purest refinements, and sollicitous to maintain the reverence of your own conscience. And farther we will add, never daring the illegal, the impious Duel, because your Life is not your own ; because the avenging of yourself is not intrusted with you by the

presume to send a challenge to any other officer or soldier to fight a Duel, upon pain, if a commissioned officer, of being cashiered ; if a non-commissioned officer or soldier, of suffering corporal punishment, at the discretion of a court martial.

“ Whatsoever officer or soldier shall upbraid another for refusing a challenge, shall himself be punished as a challenger ; and we hereby acquit and discharge all officers and soldiers of any disgrace or opinion of disadvantage, which might arise from their having refused to accept of challenges ; as they will only have acted in obedience to our orders, and done their duty as good soldiers, who subject themselves to discipline.”

Articles of War, Sect. 7. Art. 2, 5.

laws of society: much more, because your soul is not your own, but His who purchased it with his own blood; and who both by his sacred precepts, and his benevolent example, hath taught, hath commanded you, *not to resist evil*; but to subdue your own passions, to conquer your lust of revenge; and at the same time to forgive the injurious as freely, fully, and heartily, as you hope and expect to meet with forgiveness from HIM *.

ANECDOTES ON DUELLING.

(1.) Perhaps there is not any word in the language less understood than HONOUR, and but few that might not have been equally mistaken, without producing equal mischief. Honour is both a motive and an end; as “a principle of action,” it differs from virtue only in degree, and therefore necessarily in-

* My young readers will be highly entertained and instructed by a fine comment on what we have here endeavoured to enforce, if they refer to the pleasing and judicious picture which Mr. Richardson has drawn of his hero, Sir Charles Grandison, in the declining of a Duel. See Vol. ii. p. 44, &c.

cludes it, as Generosity includes Justice; and as a "Reward," it can be deserved only by those actions, which no other principle can produce. To say of another, That he is "a man of Honour," is at once to attribute the principle, and to confer the reward: But in the common acceptation of the word, HONOUR, as a principle, does not include virtue; and therefore as a reward, is frequently bestowed upon vice. Hence (such is the blindness and vassalage of human reason) men are discouraged from virtue by the fear of shame, and incited to vice by the hope of Honour. Honour indeed, is always claimed in specious terms; but the facts upon which the claim is founded, are often flagitiously wicked. Lothario arrogates the character of "a Man of Honour," for having defended a lady who had put herself under his protection from insult, at the risque of life; and Aleator, for fulfilling an engagement, to which the law would not have obliged him, at the expence of liberty. But, the champion of the lady had first seduced her to adultery, and to preserve her from the resentment of her husband,

had killed him in a Duel; and the martyr to his promise had paid a sum, which should have discharged the bill of a tradesman, to a gamester of quality, who had given him credit at cards! Such, in the common opinion, are "Men of Honour;" and he, who in certain circumstances should abstain from murder, perfidy, or ingratitude, would be avoided, as reflecting infamy upon his company! See the Adventurer, No. 61.

(2.) Eugenio, in consequence of a quarrel with the illiberal and brutish Ventosus, received a challenge from the latter; which he answered by the following billet. " Sir, your behaviour last night has convinced me that you are a scoundrel; and your letter this morning, that you are a fool. If I should accept your challenge, I should myself be both. I owe a duty to God and my country, which I deem it infamous to violate; and I am entrusted with a life, which I think cannot without folly be staked against your's. I believe you have ruined, but you cannot degrade me. You may possibly, while you

sneer over this letter, secretly exult in your own safety ; but remember, that to prevent affassination, I have a sword, and to chastize insolence, a cane."—This letter was delivered to Ventosus, who read it with all the extravagances of rage and disdain. The person who conveyed it, however, endeavoured to sooth and encourage him. He represented Eugenio as a poltroon, whom he ought no otherwise to punish than by removing him from the rank into which he had intruded ; and this, he said, would be very easily accomplished. Accordingly it was soon industriously reported, that Eugenio had struck a person of high rank, and refused him " the Satisfaction of a gentleman," which he had condescended to ask. For not accepting a challenge, Eugenio could not be legally punished, because it was made his duty as a soldier by the articles of war * ; but it drew upon him the contempt of his superior officers, and made them very solicitous to find out some pretence to dismiss him. The friends of Ventosus immediately intimated, that the act of violence to which Eugenio had been provoked, was com-

* See page 18.

mitted within the verge of the court, and was therefore a cause to break him ; as for that offence he was liable to be punished with the loss of his hand, by a law, which tho' disused, was still in force. This expedient was eagerly adopted, and Eugenio was accordingly deprived of his commission."

(3.) Forgiveness of injuries, and a merciful disposition towards those who have offended us, is not only an infallible mark of a great and noble mind ; but is our indispensable duty as reasonable creatures, and peculiarly so as Christians. The following is a fine example of this virtue. Gaston, marquis de Renty, an illustrious nobleman, was a Soldier and a Christian, and had the peculiar felicity to reconcile the seeming opposition between those characters. He had a command in the French army, and had the misfortune to receive a challenge from a person of distinction in the same service. The marquis returned for answer, That he was ready to convince the gentleman that he was in the wrong ; or, if he could not convince

him, was as ready to ask his pardon. The other, not satisfied with this reply, insisted upon his meeting him with the sword. To which the marquis sent this answer: "That he was resolved not to do it, since God and his king had forbidden it; otherwise, he would have him know, that all the endeavours he had used to pacify him, did not proceed from any fear of him, but of Almighty God, and his displeasure: that he should go every day about his usual business, and if he did assault him, he would make him repent it." The angry man, not able to provoke the marquis to a duel, and meeting him one day by chance, drew his sword, and attacked him: the marquis soon wounded and disarmed both him and his second, with the assistance of a servant who attended him. But then did this truly-christian nobleman shew the difference betwixt a brutish and a christian courage; for leading them to his tent, he refreshed them with wine and cordials, caused their wounds to be dressed, and their swords to be restored to them; then dismissed them with christian and friendly

advice, and was never heard to mention the affair afterwards, even to his nearest friends. It was an usual saying with this great man, "That there was more true courage and generosity in bearing and forgiving an injury, for the love of God, than in requiting it with another; in suffering, rather than revenging; because the thing was really more difficult." Adding, "that bulls and bears had courage enough, but it was a brutal courage; whereas that of men, should be such as became rational beings and Christians."

(4.) We cannot, perhaps, better instance the noblest way of taking revenge, than that heretofore pointed out by a common soldier. When the great Condé commanded the Spanish army in Flanders, and laid siege to one of its towns, the soldier in question being ill-treated by a general officer, and struck several times with a cane, for some words he had let fall, answered very coolly, "That he should soon make him repent it." Fifteen days after, the same general officer ordered the colonel of the trenches to find him out a bold and

intrepid fellow in his regiment, to do a notable piece of service, and for which he promised a reward of an hundred pistoles. The soldier we are speaking of, who passed for the bravest in the regiment, offered himself to the business; and taking with him thirty of his comrades, whom he selected, discharged his commission, which was a very hazardous one, with incredible courage and success. On his return, the officer highly commended him, and gave him the hundred pistoles he had promised. These, however, the soldier presently distributed among his comrades; saying, he did not serve for pay; and demanded only, that if his late action seemed to deserve any recompence, they would make him an officer; "And now, Sir," continued he, to the general (who did not know him,) "I am the soldier whom you so abused fifteen days ago; and I told you, I would make you repent it." The general instantly recollected him, and in great admiration of his virtue, threw his arms round his neck, begged his pardon, and gave him a commission that very day.

(5.) A quarrel having arisen between a celebrated gentleman in the literary world, and one of his acquaintance; the latter heroically, and no less laconically, concluded a letter to the former, on the subject of the dispute, with "I have a life at your service, if you dare to take it." To which the other replied, "You say you have a life at my service, if I dare to take it. I must confess to you that I dare not take it: I thank my God, I have not the courage to take it. But though I own that I am afraid to deprive you of *your* life, yet, Sir, permit me to assure you, that I am equally thankful to the almighty Being, for mercifully bestowing on me sufficient resolution, if attacked, to defend *my own*." This unexpected kind of reply had the effect; it brought the madman back again to reason; friends intervened, and the affair was compromised.

(6.) The famous Sir Walter Raleigh (a man of known courage and honour) being very injuriously treated by a hot-headed rash youth, who next proceeded to challenge him, and on his refusal, spit upon him; and that

+ too in public; The knight, taking out his handkerchief, with great calmness made him only this reply. “Young man, if I could as easily wipe your blood from my conscience, as I can this injury from my face, I would this moment take away your life.”—The consequence was, that the youth, struck with a sudden and strong sense of his misbehaviour, fell upon his knees, and begged forgiveness.

(7.) The Turks, we are assured, suffer no such things as duels in their dominions. Busbequius tells us of a reproof given to a valiant man by a basha of Constantinople, for boasting that he had challenged his enemy, which is well worthy the notice of every thinking Christian. “How durst thou,” said he, “challenge thy fellow-creature to a duel?—What! was there not a *Christian* to fight with?—Do not both of you eat the emperor’s bread?—And yet, forsooth, you must go about to take away each other’s lives! What precedent had you for this? Do not you know that whoever of the twain had died, the emperor had lost a subject?” Saying this, the

challenger was immediately ordered to prison, where he lay pining many months, and was at last with difficulty released, and even then, with the loss of his reputation.

(8.) When any matter of difference had fallen out in Macedon betwixt two persons, who were notoriously men of a turbulent and contentious temper, it was brought before king Philip, that he might determine it at his pleasure; Who is reported to have generally passed this exemplary sentence upon them: "You," (said he to the one) "I command immediately to run out of Macedon; and You," turning to the other, "see that you make all imaginary haste after him:" Thus banishing them as pests from the capital. A good riddance (says our author) of such salamanders, as delight to live in the fire of contention; commencing sharp quarrels upon trivial accounts, and withal knowing no time wherein to end them. See Wanley's History of Man, B. 4. c. 42.

(9.) The Greeks and Romans, who lived before the general corruption of their coun-

trymen, never dreamt that a DUEL (which is to be decided by chance, or at most, by a skill in fencing, which they considered as the profession of their slaves,) was a proper method of justifying one's self with regard to a reproach; which frequently does not at all concern a person's bravery. The advantage gained proves only that one is a better Gladiator than his adversary, but not that he is exempt from the vice with which he was charged. See Dr. Jackson's *Literatura Græca*.

(10.) It is no uncommon thing, with persons of the duelling stamp, to make a very liberal, but inexplicable use of the term "Satisfaction." An honest country gentleman had the misfortune to fall into company with two or three modern Men of Honour, where he happened to be very ill treated. One of the company, being conscious of his offence, sent a note to him the next morning, telling him, "he was ready to give him Satisfaction."—"Why, surely now," (says the plain honest man) "this is fine doing: Last night he sent me away very much out of

temper, and this morning, he fancies it would be a Satisfaction, to be run thro' the body !” See the Tatler, No. 25.

(II.) This abominable custom of fighting Duëls seems, in some measure, owing, as we observed, p. 16, to that Gothic fashion of men's wearing swords, who are not of the military class ; or, if they are soldiers, when they are not upon military duty. A gentleman cannot go to court, to church, to see his friends, or to visit his patient, unless he is armed with an instrument of slaughter. The ancient Greeks and Romans never wore swords but in war, neither were any Duëls (as we have above hinted) ever fought amongst them. If they challenged one another, it was either a contest between rival princes, and to prevent a greater effusion of blood ; or else, it was singly to fight against the enemies of their country. Cæsar has given us a remarkable instance of this kind of challenge, in his excellent Commentaries. Two centurions of high rank, T. Pulpio, and L. Varenus, having with great animosity long contested which was the braver

man, or most worthy of preferment ; and being present at Cæsar's camp, when assaulted by the Gauls, the former, in the heat of the attack, called aloud to the latter in these words : " Quid dubitas, Varene ? Aut quem locum probanda virtutis tuæ expectas ? Hic dies, hic dies de nostris controversiis judicabit." " Why should you remain in doubt, Varenus ? What fairer opportunity can you desire for the proof of your valour ?—This, this shall be the day to decide our controversies." Immediately on this spirited call, Pulpio went out of the camp, and rushed upon the enemy. Varenus followed his rival ; who, with his javelin, slew the first of the Gauls who engaged him ; but being attacked by a shower of darts, one of them pierced his shield, and stuck after such a manner in his belt, as prevented him from drawing his sword. The enemy presently surrounded him, thus encumbered and unable to defend himself. At this instant, Varenus came up to his assistance, slew one, and drove the rest before him ; but, pursuing them too eagerly, he stepped into a hole, and fell down. Pulpio,

who had now disincumbered himself from the dart, and drawn his sword, came very seasonably to the rescue of Varenus; with whom, after having slain many of the Gauls, he returned with safety and glory to the camp. Thus the Romans, we see, did not in their private quarrels sheath their swords in each other's breast; Contests of valour among them were only calls and incitements to the exertion of public and patriotic deeds. See Potter's *Antiq. Græc.* vol. ii. p. 51, 88. and Cæsar's *Comment. Bell. Gallic.* l. 5. c. 44.

(12.) It is reported of the famous viscount de Turenne, that when he was a young officer, and at the siege of a fortified town, he had no less than twelve challenges sent him; of which he put in his pocket, without further notice: but, being soon after commanded upon a desperate attack on some part of the fortifications, he sent a billet to each of the challengers, acquainting them "that he had received their papers, which he deferred answering till a proper occasion offered both for them and himself, to exert their cou-

rage for the king's service; that, being ordered to assault the enemy's works the next day, he desired their company; when they would have an opportunity of signalizing their own bravery, and of being witnesses of his." We may leave the reader to determine in this case who acted most like a man of sense, of temper, and of true courage.

(13.) When Augustus Cæsar received a challenge from Mark Anthony, (in his decline of fortune) to engage him in single combat, he very calmly answered the bearer of the message; "If Anthony is weary of his life, tell him there are other ways of death, besides the point of my sword!" Now, whoever deemed this an instance of cowardice? All ages have admired it as the act of a discreet and gallant man; who, sensible of his own importance, knew how to treat the petulant and vindictive humour of a discontented adversary with its deserved contempt.

(14.) The author of the Turkish Spy, writing to his friend on the subject in ques-

tion, observes, " It is not only in Italy that people kill one another in single combats ; 'tis the same in France. The best friends tear each other on the smallest occasion, and prepare for a duel in such a manner, as will appear to thee, without doubt, ridiculous. I cannot but call these christians fools, who suffer such customs among them, yet adore a Messiah, who is a God of peace ; and who call us Barbarians, when they are the only people that teach us and all other nations, the art of single combat,—the most pernicious custom that can be introduced amongst men : who cut one another's throats, oftentimes on slight occasions, and become prodigals of that treasure wherewith the Immortal has entrusted them."

(15.) What can be more shocking and painful to the good mind, than to read that account of the duel between Sir Edward Sackville and his friend Lord Bruce, given in the Guardian, No. 129, and 133! Of two brave and eminent men, companions and friends, plunging each other into present, and

perchance into future woe ! “ The gallant behaviour (as it is called) of the combatants,” to use the author’s own words, “ may serve to raise in our minds a yet higher detestation of that false Honour, which robs our country of men so fitted to support and adorn it.”— But, (as one justly remarks) barely to lose life, is the smallest of those evils which attend this mischievous practice. It is pregnant with a long, an almost endless train of disastrous consequences to parents, wives, children, friends, associates, and the community. It is an infallible expedient to be deprived of the favour of an infinite God, and to be excluded the joys of his eternal kingdom : it is the sure way to become an object of abhorrence to the angels of light, and be made the laughing-stock of devils in their dungeons of darkness : “ Shame, everlasting shame, shall be the reward of such gallantry, the promotion of such fools.” How happy would it be for such, could they now reflect on that future solemn day, wherein He who died ignominiously for us, shall descend from heaven to be our judge, in majesty and glory ! “ How will the man,

who shall die by the sword of pride and wrath, and in contention with his brother, appear before Him, at whose presence all nature shall be in an agony; when all the powers of heaven shall be shaken; when the elements shall dissolve with fervent heat; when the earth also, and all the works that are therein shall be burnt up!" Surely, it should damp in every mind the diabolical madness, which prompts men to decide their petty animosities by the hazard of eternity, to reflect, that in this one act, the criminal does not only highly offend, but forces himself uncalled into the awful presence of his Judge. This is certainly his case who dies in a duel. He that so perishes knowingly, outrages the Deity, and in that very action rushes into His offended presence! Is it possible for the heart of man to conceive a more terrible image than that of a departed spirit in this condition?—Could we but suppose it just to have left its body, and struck with the dire reflection,—“that to avoid the laughter of fools, and the bye-word of ideots, it has now precipitated itself into the din of demons, and the howlings of eternal despair;

how willingly now would it suffer the imputation of fear and cowardice, to have one moment left, not to tremble in vain!—How terrible are conviction and guilt, when they come too late for penitence!

(16.) “ I shall recount one accident (says Lord Herbert) which happened while I was at the court of the French King. All things being ready for a ball, and every one being in their place, and I myself next to the Queen, expecting when the dancers would come in, one knocked at the door, somewhat louder than became, as I thought, a very civil person. When he came in, I remember there was a sudden whisper among the ladies, saying, “ ’Tis Monsieur Balagny ;” whereupon, also I saw the ladies and gentlewomen, one after another, invite him to sit near them, and which is more, when one lady had his company awhile, another would say, “ You have enjoyed him long enough, I must have him now.” At which bold civility of theirs, tho’ I were astonished, yet it added unto my wonder, that his person could not be thought

at most but ordinary handsome. His hair, which was cut very short, half-grey; his doublet but of sackcloth, cut to his shirt; and his breeches only of plain grey cloth. Informing myself by some standers-by who he was, I was told that he was one of the gallantest men in the world, as having killed eight or nine men in single fight; and that for this reason the ladies made so much of him, it being the manner of all French women to cherish gallant men, as thinking they could not make so much of any one else, with the safety of their honour. This cavalier, though his head was half grey, he had not yet attained the age of 30 years." See p. 10. foregoing; Lord Herbert's Life, p. 70. and Hale's Golden Remains, p. 107, &c.

S E R M O N XV.

P A R T I.

On Conversation.

EPHESIANS iv. 29.

Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace to the hearers.

ENOUGH, my young friends, of FALSE PLEASURES: let us take the more grateful view; let us contemplate together, as we proposed †, those Pleasures, whose delights are real, permanent, and unimbittered; which give ample satisfaction in enjoyment, and afford the rich repast of reflection to the self-approving mind. When I enumerate amongst these the pleasures of “Conversation,” “of Reading ‡,” “of Friendship,” “of the right and industrious Employment of Time,” and as the crown of all, the plea-

† See vol. ii. Serm. 10. part 1.

‡ I do not propose to add any thing more on this subject, but refer to what has been already advanced in vol. i. Sermon 5. “on Early Application to Wisdom.”

tures and comforts “ of sincere Religion ;” you will readily acknowledge that the characters just given strictly belong to them ; and that they are indeed the genuine source of man’s highest and most rational delight.

That they may prove so, to you, my young friends, we will consider them together ; and endeavour to shew by what means they may impart most plentifully to you, from that abundance of BLESSINGS wherewith they are fraught.

The pleasures of CONVERSATION first demand our attention : Conversation, the glory and the prerogative of man, the distinguishing mark of his superiority over the animal world. Whether that world have an ability to communicate their ideas, to converse with each other, has been, with many, a subject of much doubt and speculation.—That the different species of animals can convey their conceptions to each other, seems clear beyond a doubt ; but that they are able to hold together any thing like Discourse, must for

ever be denied, till better proofs can be given than have hitherto been brought, that they possess aught like Reason or Intellect. No; as this ray of the Divinity gives to the human mind its superiority, its dominion over the inferior creation, so the power to communicate the dictates of that Reason, the conceptions of that heaven-born mind, dignifies, at the same time that it blesses in a peculiar degree, the human race. Hence the Psalmist, with expressive force, styles that member which is the instrument of so much honour, and so much good, his *Glory*, and *the best member that he hath* * : Since by means of the articulating Tongue, not only all the pleasures and all the benefits of Conversation are enjoyed ; but man, weak man, is enabled to address and praise the great God of his life ; nay, and to become, as it were, the thankful and adoring High-priest for the whole round of silent, but rejoicing Nature †.

Formed however for these high and excellent ends, and admirably capacitated, in every

* Ps. lvii. 8. xxx. 12.

† See Psalm cxlyiii.

respect, to answer them,—this GLORY of man, too frequently deviates from its purpose, and instead of the best, becomes the very worst, and most pernicious member that he hath. St. James † fully felt, and hath finely described this horrible perversion of speech: “Behold,” says he, “we put bits in the horses mouths, that they may obey us; and we turn about their whole bodies. Behold also the ships, which though they be so great, and are driven of fierce winds, yet are they turned about with a very small helm, whithersoever the governor listeth. Even so the TONGUE is a little member, and boasteth great things. Behold how great a matter a little fire kindleth! And the tongue” [ill employed] “is a fire, a world of iniquity. So is the tongue,” [if unrestrained] “among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire of hell. For every kind of birds, of beasts, and of serpents, and of things in the sea, is tamed, and hath been tamed of mankind; but the Tongue can no man tame; it

† James, chap. iii. 3, &c.

is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison; therewith bleſs we God, even the Father; and therewith curſe we men, who are made after the ſimilitude of God [their common father.] Out of the ſame mouth proceedeth bleſſing and curſing. My brethren, theſe things ought not ſo to be. Doth a fountain ſend forth at the ſame place, ſweet water and bitter? Can the fig-tree, my brethren, bear olive-berries, or the vine, figs? So can no fountain yield both ſalt water and freſh. Who is a WISE MAN, and endued with knowledge amongſt you? Let him ſhew, out of a GOOD CONVERSATION, his works with meekneſs of wiſdom."

This, my young friends, is what I would eſpecially wiſh you to ſhew; and as you learn from this ſtrong paſſage of the ſacred writer, (upon which common life will read you but too plain a comment,) how eaſy it is to offend in tongue, and how ſcandalous and pernicious ſuch offences are,—depriving us at once of all the comforts of that choiceſt bleſſing, rational Converſation, and at the ſame

time subjecting us to the wrath of our God : — I flatter myself you will determine to avoid all those Abuses of the divine gift of speech, which we will now proceed briefly to specify ; that so no corrupt communication may ever proceed out of your lips, but such as is *good*, fitted to answer all the valuable ends which the gracious Creator designed, when he gave us this distinguishing prerogative.

By “corrupt communication,” St. Paul unquestionably means such discourse as tends at once to shew the defilement of the speaker’s mind, and to defile and pollute the minds of those who hear ; discourse, which is in every view CRIMINAL, and destructive of all the good purposes of Conversation. Of this kind are “ Profaneness and Blasphemy, Obscenity, Lying, and Slander.” These, my young friends, sap the very foundations of liberal converse, and dreadfully pervert, from its proper, its beneficent use, man’s glory, the divine and cheering gift of Speech ! Let no such corrupt, such poisonous Communication proceed out of your mouths ; since thus

you can neither display your own wit or understanding, or in any degree improve others.

For surely, there lives not a rational creature, who can think it any mark of a superior mind to “blaspheme” that only Name, by which we are called, and to hurl bold “profaneness” at the throne of the Omnipotent ! In truth, nothing can so amply testify a weak understanding ; for, as there is no practice more detestable in itself, more full of guilt and impiety, so is there none, which hath so little to urge in justification or excuse —no pleasure which tempted, to plead ; no profit which invited, to offer ! So that those who accustom themselves to the horrid usage of profane and blasphemous discourse, must stand forth of all offenders at once the most criminal, the most weak, and the most completely self-condemned. And the rather, as it is not only most easy to abstain from the diabolical language of execrations and blasphemy ; but as it is found, by repeated instances, that those who unreservedly use it on

other occasions, can abstain, in the company of persons of character and virtue, whom they respect and reverence!

Unthinking mortals! And shall the presence of a Fellow-creature, weak and frail like yourselves, be sufficient to awe you into decency, and to curb the daring licence of your sinful tongues:—and shall the presence of that eternal, almighty, and avenging Majesty, who hears and notes, and will punish with terrible vengeance your vile and repeated blasphemies;—shall His tremendous PRESENCE have no influence? shall it inspire no awe? shall it impress with no fearful, no alarming apprehensions of his justice and his wrath? Tho' now, with daring, inconsiderate, and abandoned insolence, you call down, in terms shocking to the ear, “Damnation from that God,” bold to defy, and presumptuous to imprecate; the day, the dreadful day is hastening on apace, when ye will sink, poor, weak, defenceless creatures, into very abjects and cowards, before his blasting frown: when the quick curse, which you have so

often called down upon yourselves, launched like blue lightning from his irresistible right hand, will drive you into everlasting perdition; and leave you eternally to execrate amidst Devils and condemned Spirits, with empty blasphemies, the madness and the folly of your conduct!

God forbid, my young friends, that so horrid a fate should befall any of you! God forbid, that any of you should fall into the guilt of so enormous, so inexcusable a vice! It would be easy for me to enlarge upon it, and shew, in a variety of views, its atrocious and destructive nature: But I cannot persuade myself, that you would tread these courts, and listen to these duties, if you could allow yourselves in such an unpardonable practice. I will therefore only observe farther, that if you would avoid this first and greatest impediment to rational Conversation, you cannot be too cautious of admitting any thing tending to an Oath, or to the Name or concerns of God, in your common discourse.

It is unpleasing to remark, in the general intercourse of life, how very little attentive to this particular many of those persons are, who abhor, and start from the imputation of common swearers; and who are, on several other accounts, decent and respectable. Yet they (and I am sorry to observe, that this disgrace is sometimes allowed to attach even the delicacy of the female sex) can allow themselves unreservedly, and without the least compunction, in the free use of the name of GOD, of LORD, of CHRIST: nay, and frequently can even hazard the sacredness of their FAITH, their SOUL, and the like, in something, which seems very similar to an Oath, if indeed it be not a most solemn and serious one. This practice is not only in direct contradiction to St. Paul's advice in the text; but to our Lord's precept, *Swear not at all*, and to his advice that our communication should be simple and sincere*; and certainly comes under the malediction of the commandment which declares, that the *Lord will not hold them guiltless, who take his*

* See Matt. v. 37.

Name in vain. It is a practice highly immoral, and destructive of the ends of good Conversation ; it incurs the guilt of blasphemy ; it tends to take off the restraint arising from a due reverence to God and his Gospel ; and is by all means to be avoided in youth especially ; by all means to be corrected in those who have, or do at any time unfortunately allow themselves in it.

To such, and to all of you, my young friends, I would recommend the practice, and the example of the incomparable Mr. Boyle, who never used the name of the most high God, the Sovereign of all the Kings of the earth, but he either moved his hat, or made some token of obeysance and respect. And whoever, like that great and good man, have on their souls a just and serious impression of the superlative and unutterable greatness of the God of Glory, will never dare, on any account, or even in the slightest manner, to prophane or unhallow his awful Name ; but, on the contrary, will hear and repeat it with religious reverence ; and will honour it no less by their lips, than by their lives, with every service which their weak-

ness and humility can render. “ Accustom not then yourself to SWEARING, (to close this head with the advice of the wise man;) neither use yourself to the NAMING of the holy One. For as a slave who is continually beaten, shall not be without a blue mark, so he that sweareth and nameth God continually, shall not be faultless. A man that useth much swearing, shall be filled with iniquity, and a plague shall never depart from his house. There is a word [a blasphemous, profane Conversation] which is cloathed about with death; God grant, that it be not found in the heritage of Jacob!—for they that use it, shall leave their memory to be cursed, and their reproach shall not be blotted out. But they that remain shall know, that there is nothing better than the fear of the Lord, and that there is nothing sweeter than to take heed unto his commandments *.

Another species of corrupt Communication, decried by St. Paul, and to be avoided by every man who wishes to enjoy the benefits of refined conversation, is “ Lewd and ob-

* Eccclus. Chap. xxiii. ver. 9, &c.

scene Discourse ;” the certain testimony of a depraved mind, and one of the surest means to deprave the minds of others. Our Saviour hath told us, that *out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh* ; and hence our Words, as being but the dress of Thought, the index of the heart, assume either their merit or blame ; whence again we are informed, that by our Words we shall be justified or condemned. What then can so amply declare a heart full of uncleanness and defilement, as a delight and relish in that Conversation, which kindles a blush upon the cheek of Modesty, and makes the eye of Virtue look down with concern ? Nor is this the only evil of such Conversation ; for while it betrays the inward rottenness of the heart, it tends at the same time to take off the restraints of purity, and debauches the chaste and innocent mind.

Never therefore, my young friends, allow yourselves in the use of it, or associate with those who are familiar in the filthy practice. Youthful lusts, God knows, are but too pre-

valent, and need nothing to awaken and en-
 flame them; on the contrary, every possible
 method should be exerted, in compliance with
 the Apostle's counsel, to flee from, resist, and
 subdue them. And believe me, you will
 find more effectual to this good end, than at
 first you might suppose, a determined resolu-
 tion never to allow on your own lips, the
 most distant hint or syllable of obscenity;
 never to familiarize yourselves with those,
 who indulge in so scandalous an abuse of lan-
 guage: and whose corrupt tongues are con-
 tinually venting the poisonous steams of their
 lustful hearts. If, haply, at any time thrown
 into company of this sort, you have an
 easy and a sure method to shew your disap-
 probation, at least, of so debasing a perversion
 of the divine Gift of Speech: "You can be
 grave, and silent." And let me tell you,
 my young friends, if you have judgment and
 fortitude enough to be so, you will soon find
 the happiest effect from so powerful a remon-
 strance. I have seen,—with pleasure I have
 seen, the serious look of a virtuous and ami-
 able youth, pierce the heart, and put to

silence the tongue of age and indecency. And oh, my young friends, if you meet with such, be firm, be modest; and be assured, the incautious jest, the ribbald wit, the studied double-meaning *, will not long offend you: For Virtue has charms too strong to be resisted; and the more aged and advanced in life will blush for themselves; and remember, how much They are to be condemned, who forget to "Reverence Youth."

But if you mean to be revered by others; you must first Reverence Yourself: And I know not of any particular more necessary to this end, as well as to all the purposes of Conversation, than "Truth." Indeed, Truth is the very basis of all Conversation, of all intercourse between man and man; who, if they can be supposed to speak falsely, and to deal deceitfully with each other, all friendly communication, all rational society must cease. On this account it is, that the universal consent of mankind hath united to hold at once in the bitterest scorn, and the

* See Ephes. v. 4.

lowest contempt, the character of the Lyar. Almost every other vice hath, or boasts to have, something of bravery annexed to it; but this is so mean and pitiful, so groveling and base, that the abject, guilty of it, shrinks into the lowest insignificance before us. And truly Contempt would be his properest reward, did not the mischiefs and injuries to others so frequently arising from his lying tongue, render him justly an object of Abhorrence also, and a nuisance to society; and while thus scorned and hated by men, as perverting the divine power of speech, as desecrating the unpolluted sanctity of Truth, the Liar is held in abomination by that God also *, who is Truth, and who hath destined to eternal perdition whosoever *loveth and maketh a Lie* †.

Considerations, more than sufficient, my young friends, to enforce upon your minds the strictest attachment to veracity; to undissembled sincerity,—that ever amiable and

* See Proverbs xii. 22.

† Revel. xxii. 15.

estimable Virtue,—in all you say and do. You will find the pleasures and the rewards of it inexpressibly great and delightful. You will be free from all the anxieties and entanglements in which falsehood and dissimulation are continually involved. Truth is in its nature so plain and simple, that it requires no art, no subterfuge. It gives boldness and ingenuity to the countenance; it gives firmness and intrepidity to actions. Oh cultivate sacred Truth, as a fund of self-complacence, of respect and love from others, and of favour with your God! Labour to attain that venerably-pleasing character, of an *Israelite without guile*. Sincerity is the very ground-work and foundation of almost every social virtue. But for the pleasures of Conversation, where-with we are now more particularly concerned, they can have no Existence without veracity. To enjoy them therefore, resolve on all occasions to maintain the strictest attachment to that veracity; to be sincere and undissembled in all your discourse: In particular, never accustom yourselves to strong and positive assertions, which generally lead on to oaths, in

order to support and confirm them; and thus too commonly add to falshood the guilt of prophaneness. Nor by any means indulge yourselves in the practice of telling marvelous and extraordinary tales: Your credulity will be ridiculed, or your veracity doubted. In short, maintain, on all occasions, plain, simple, natural Truth; assured that the *Lip of Truth shall be had in honour, shall be established for ever: but a lying Tongue is but for a moment* *.

There is another species of corrupt Communication, which may, with great propriety, come under the head of Lying; and that is “Calumny and Slander”—the bane of all Conversation; the index of a black and malevolent mind; and the forest plague of social felicity. Yet, my young friends, detestable and destructive as it is, contradictory, in the strongest degree, to the plainest and most important precepts of Christ, nay, and even unworthy the character of rational, much more of civilized, creatures; into what so-

* Proverbs xii. 19, &c.

ciety shall I lead you, to what company or Conversation shall I be able to recommend you, where this fatal mischief will not intrude?

But why lament the evil? Be it our care rather to avoid it. To which purpose, study to engraft upon the goodness of your natural tempers and dispositions, the noble refinements of Divine and Christian Love*; that Love, which inspires with the truest, with the most genuine good-nature, and makes the possessor the delight, the favourite of all mankind. The Heart, fraught with this Love, will fill the Tongue with gentleness and kindness; nor from it can ever flow the language of malevolence and injury, the poison of slander, or the keen severity † of censoriousness and detraction. So far from it, taught by that Love, inspired by that right and rational good-nature ‡, just and generous sentiments will fill

* See 1 Cor. xiii.

† See Proverbs xii. 18.

‡ May I be allowed to refer my young Hearers to a Poem on this subject, the first in my little Collection?

the soul: The weakness and imperfections, the follies or the vices of fellow-creatures will be observed with candour and concern; conscious of our own nature, we shall make proper allowances for their defects, who share that nature in common with us; shall never blazon an absent brother's faults, magnify his vices, or depreciate his virtues; but, well convinced of the value and importance of reputation, shall secure our own, by being tender and cautious of the reputation of others.

While sentiment and principle, while the just dictates of Christian Love preserve you, my young friends, from the black guilt of determined and malicious Calumny: Let not an allowed volubility of Tongue, or a vacancy of mind, an emptiness of understanding, betray you into unpremeditated, and undesigned censoriousness. A love of talking, and a barrenness of subject, are too often the fertile sources of this evil †. Place

† Here it may be proper just to add, as a caution (tho' perhaps it might be thought to belong more properly to the general hints respecting Conversation) that speaking too

therefore a guard, a restraint upon your Lips, if you find yourself unhappily prone to garrulity: and be careful at your leisure hours, well to store your mind, that when you prepare for the pleasures of Conversation, you may be able to produce something from your

largely either in Praise or Dispraise of any person, is absurd and dangerous, and will tend to attach the person's character for veracity, who indulges so improper a custom. But I can't express my own sentiments better than in the words of the ingenious Mr. Stillingfleet:

Be rarely warm in censure, or in praise,
 Few men deserve our passion either ways:
 For half the world but floats 'twixt good and ill,
 As chance disposes objects, these the will;
 'Tis but a see-saw game, where Virtue now
 Mounts above Vice, and then sinks down as low.
 Besides, the wise still hold it for a rule
 To trust that judgment most that seems most cool:
 For all that rises to Hyperbole,
 Proves that we err at least in the degree.
 But if your temper to extremes should lead,
 Always upon the indulging side exceed:
 For tho' to blame most lend a willing ear,
 Yet hatred ever will attend on fear:
 And when a neighbour's dwelling blazes out,
 The world will think, 'tis time to look about.

See the Essay on Conversation.

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treasury, worthy yourself and those with whom you converse.

It is shameful to hear, as we often do, from “rational Creatures,” the want of other matter than Scandal for Conversation urged, as a plea for the wretched trifling waste of time at Cards. What then! can a set of intelligent Beings, formed for Society, for Conversation, for the noble Intercourse of Soul with Soul; and alone, of all our Creation, favoured with this high, this exquisite prerogative?—can such Beings find in the whole round of nature and of grace, in the visible or invisible world, in the past or the present ages, in time or Eternity—nothing worthy to engage their thoughts, to employ their speculations, to communicate their ideas, to amuse, delight, improve, or enlarge their minds? Nothing but the little, pitiful, insignificant defects of others—marked stronger, perhaps, in their own conduct; Nothing, but what they should blush to mention, or weep to hear told!

Away, my young friends, with such poor, such wretched pretences ! such hypocritical self-deluding arguments, to countenance the meanest and most despicable abuse of time, and the veriest degradation of the human intellect ! The liberal and the virtuous, the serious and contemplative, can ever find sufficient matter to supply Conversation with its choicest luxuries, without wounding the reputation, or stabbing to the heart an absent brother's good name ! As they find no propensity to a vice thus accumulated with guilt, so to shun it, they have no cause to " cry for Mercy to the lowest amusement ;" or to pass their important hours, in insignificance, to say the least ;—how often might we add, in the most desperate and destructive employment † ! Sollicitous at all times to improve their own minds, they enter with satisfaction the social assembly ; as assured that the minds of others will gain improvement from their acquisitions, at the same time that they impart, in return, their pleasing contribution of knowledge and wisdom.

† See the Sermon on Gaming.

SERMON XV. 63

Thus, my young friends, I have traced out four capital evils in Conversation, which taint it in its very vitals, and are ever to be avoided;—"Blasphemy," "Lewdness," "Lying," and "Slander." But it is not enough that you shun these. To enjoy the "Delights of Conversation," other rules are necessary; and we will proceed to them in our next.

END OF PART I.

S E R M O N XV.

P A R T II.

On CONVERSATION.

EPHESIANS iv. 29.

Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good, to the use of edifying ; that it may minister grace to the hearers.

IN conformity with the sacred counsel of the prophet, *Cease to do evil, learn to do well*; St. Paul exhorts, with respect to CONVERSATION, that we First shun that which is *corrupt*, and Secondly, practise that which is *good*.

Avoiding therefore the extreme evils of “Profaneness,” “Indecency,” “Lying,” and “Slander,” those worst branches of corrupt communication ; you are to be careful, my young friends, in the next place, that your Conversation be not only innocent, but *good*, instructive, useful, and pleasing : To which purpose you must diligently attend no less to the “Matter,” than the “Manner,” of your Conversation.

With regard to the former, there can be no doubt, that St. Paul designs to recommend especially serious and religious discourse, the most interesting, the most instructive, and the most noble of all others : but yet not so to recommend it, as to exclude every other subject of discourse, or to render it criminal to converse on different and ordinary topics. Every wise and good man, would certainly wish to converse most freely and frequently on those matters which interest and delight him most, and to such a man no matters can be so interesting and delightful, as the great, the important truths of religion. But in proportion to their importance, should be our prudence in introducing, and our caution in discussing them.

There are, my young friends, those who, heated with false zeal, and agitated by enthusiasm, continually obtrude religious Conversation ; and without the least prudence or discernment, nauseously press it upon every company. You will observe, in consequence of this impropriety, the dull and stagnating

silence which commonly ensues : or, perhaps, which is worse, the illiberal jest, or sour contention which spring up, to the total abolition of all rational Conversation. Made wise by these admonitions, and still more so by His counsel, who hath commanded you *not to throw pearls before swine* ; you will be cautious how you force religious Conversation. Large and mixed companies will seldom bear it : the utmost you can do, in such societies, will be to preserve the innocence of the Conversation ; and now and then, perhaps, with delicacy and attention, to throw in a remark which may be serious and useful. More than this, will not only subject you to the charge of impertinence, but to one which is still more unpleasing, I mean, that of “ Hypocrisy ;” For true religion, being of a silent nature, men justly suspect those of a deficiency in it, or of false pretences to it, who are continually wearing it in their mouths, not shewing it by the noiseless tenour of an active, uniform, and virtuous life.

Thus cautious of obtruding religious discourse, you must endeavour to shew no less wariness and prudence, when so happy as to have found a proper season, and a proper set, to enjoy this highest feast of the rational mind. By no means assume the character of the "Dissertator," or the "Disputant:" the one never fails to weary and disgust; the other to irritate and offend: and both serve so much to feed and to discover those tempers and dispositions, which are diametrically opposite to the meekness and humility of the Christian, that they totally destroy all the good purposes of religious Conversation. It is the peculiar, the distinguishing praise of this Conversation, that while it informs the head, it amends the heart; and therefore we cannot be too attentive, that none of those passions intermingle themselves in it, which are fatal to moral improvement. A spirit of modest enquiry; a willingness to hear and to learn; a deference to the opinions of others; and a respectful proposal of your own, will tend at all times to enlarge Your minds, and to gratify the minds of those with

whom you converse. Nor can we conceive, that the human intellect can enjoy a more luxurious entertainment, than Conversation, thus regulated and formed amongst men of thinking, serious dispositions, on subjects the highest and most ennobling in themselves, and to the human nature of the most momentous weight and concern. An entertainment, my young friends, by no means to be expected in large and mixed assemblies: but for which you must retire, with the wisest men of ancient times *, to the shades of private life; and in the small and select band, known and approved, enjoy this delicious repast, this intercourse of soul with soul, this most improving, most elevating, and most useful Communication.

* "Thus, says Mr. Hervey, Socrates, the wisest of the Athenian sages; thus Scipio, the most accomplished of the Roman generals, conversed.—Thus Cicero, the prince of orators, improved his elegant retirement at the Tusculan villa. And Horace, the brightest genius in the court of Augustus, formed the most agreeable hours of his conversation upon this very plan." See Theron and Aspasio, vol. i. p. 5.

But not with respect to Religion only, it is to be feared, that if you would wish to enjoy the true delights of refined Conversation, on topics of any kind, you must never expect it in large and general meetings: "The small, select, and social band*", seems alone calculated to diffuse and enjoy this exquisite pleasure †. Mixing with these, you must remember, that Conversation is a matter of mutual traffick; towards which every man is bound in duty to contribute his quota; and therefore if he means to partake of the profit, he ought by all means to furnish his part of the stock.

To this end, your great endeavour should be so to supply your own mind with the proper materials for Conversation, that you may

* There is an old but good remark concerning the number requisite to form such a band: "They should never be more than the Muses, it is said, or fewer than the Graces."

† Dean Swift, in his useful Hints on Conversation, calls it "an useful and innocent pleasure, fitted for every period and condition of life, and very much in all men's power." See his Works, vol. xiii.

be able, like the rich Householder, to bring out of your plenteous treasury, *things new and old*, for the entertainment and instruction of your friends and companions. We have before observed, that as it is *from the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh*, so men's words and Conversation necessarily flow from the ruling principle within: and therefore, if by reading and reflection your mind is occupied upon wise and sensible objects, and your thoughts filled with them, you will be naturally led to communicate from your store; and your Discourse, to the great emolument of those with whom you converse, will take the same useful and improving turn with your Thoughts.

However, one thing is carefully to be avoided; "a monopoly of the conversation." Though your topic is most instructive; tho' you understand it completely, and can treat of it in the most masterly manner; nothing can excuse your assuming to yourself the principal part of the discourse, and not allowing to others their due share and portion of it.

For Conversation, founded upon equality, by no means allows of engrossing: every man has a right to claim his part, and expects to be heard. But this is not the only evil or offence of garrulity; it betrays a weak and an arrogant mind: and if it be accompanied, as too frequently happens, with an insolent and dogmatical air, with an overbearing, presumptuous, and pedantic * manner, it defeats the ends of Conversation; and infallibly brands the intemperate prater with the stigma of contempt.

Pythagoras, my young friends, well convinced of the great wisdom and utility of knowing how to restrain the tongue, enjoined all his disciples a three years silence: and he assured, there is more good sense and advantage in knowing how to keep silence

* Pedantry, as I take the word, says Dean Swift, is not properly used: because pedantry is the too frequent and unseasonable obtruding our own knowledge in common discourse, and placing too great a value upon it; by which definition men of the court or army, may be as guilty of Pedantry, as a philosopher or divine, &c. See the whole discourse.

properly, than you are aware of. “ Silence in company, if not dulness or sheepishness, is observation or discretion *.” An attention to others, conciliates their regard and attention to you : and a modest question thrown in, now and then ; a kind of enquiring observation, never fails to conciliate to young men the esteem of all with whom they converse †. Always to be more knowing than you appear to be ; never forwardly to obtrude yourself, or to wish to outshine others in company ; but on all occasions to wear the garb of diffident modesty, is the infallible road to gain in Conversation both knowledge and respect,

Besides engrossing the Conversation, we must note another defect, the consequence generally of a love of talking,—that fertile source of innumerable evils. Never, my

* Sir W. Temple.

† The best rules to form a young man, says Sir W. Temple, are, to talk little, to hear much, to reflect alone upon what has passed in company, to distrust his own opinions, and value others, that deserve it.

S E R M O N X V. 73

young friends, on any account, unless immediately called upon, and urged by self-defence, “ make Yourself the topic of your discourse.” Nothing so nauseous, so offensive as Egotism : it bespeaks the empty, vain, and insignificant mind. Men, conscious of the source from whence this error springs, will suspect whatever you say, and withhold from you all the praise you propose to gain by holding forth your own perfections to view : and should you, with some, absurdly affect to condemn yourself in sober sadness, for some vice or evil (to which you unfortunately are addicted † !) your hearers will have discernment enough, be sure, to see of what virtue you thus mean to claim the excess ; and will ridicule the weakness which You alone

† Dean Swift, than whom no man understood human nature better, observes in his *Hints on Conversation*, that “ some make a vanity of telling their faults ; They are the strangest men in the world, they cannot dissemble ; they own it is a folly : they have lost abundance of advantages by it ; but if you would give them the world, they cannot help it ; there is something in their nature which abhors insincerity and constraint ;—with many other unsufferable topics of the same altitude,

are too blind to overlook. To please and to be instructed, you will act wisely to “annihilate yourself,” as it were, in Conversation: nothing is so disgusting as a man “too big” for his company*; and nothing so despicable and tedious, as the insipid retailer of dull stories and circumstantial narratives; the miserable, minute, self-important historian of uninteresting details, which lull even sweet Patience herself to sleep, and make Good sense run mad!

But let me caution you, my young friends, as against the Excess of talking † on one hand,

* Nothing so unreasonable or insufferable, in common Conversation, as sufficiency, says Sir William Temple. See his Heads of an Essay on Convers. Works, vol. iii. p. 525, 8vo. and the Anecdotes, p. 104.

† A distinction here should take place, which is well put by Dean Swift: It is not, says he, a fault in company to talk much; but to continue it long, is certainly a great one; for if the majority of those who are got together be naturally silent or cautious, the Conversation will flag, unless it be often renewed by one among them, who can start new subjects; Provided he doth not dwell upon them, but leaveth room for answers and replies.

so against the defect on the other. A modest and respectful silence is doubtless most wise and amiable; but a dull and morose one is hateful and disgusting. And I know not, whether the eternal shallow prater may not be the better companion of the two, than the man who in solemn silence hears, and speaks not: Or only, perhaps, in blunt honesty, as he calls it, now and then speaks his mind, to the pain and disgust of all present; Or, with an importance, which nothing but his dullness can exceed, occasionally distils a sentence or two, drop by drop, from his oracular lips.

That great apostle, whose words we have taken as the foundation of this discourse, tells us, that it was a rule of his conduct "*to become all things to all men, so far as reason and religion allowed him to comply, that he might gain some; with the Jews a Jew, with the Gentiles a Gentile.*" 'Tis a rule, my young friends, no less useful for the attaining all the pleasures and advantages of Conver-

sation *. *Become all things to all men*, under the same invariable distinctions: endeavour, as much as you can, and ought, to conform yourselves to the taste, character, and present humour of those with whom you converse. To do this, certainly, requires discernment and judgment; but a due attention, and constant observation of men and manners, will be found sufficient to teach it, at least in a great degree. Especially, if while you take the rule from St. Paul, you take also from Him the grand principle whereupon he framed it; namely, a sincere love to your fellow creatures, grounded on the principle of Christian truth. This love will inspire you with so amiable a desire to please all those with whom you converse, to their Edification, that it will teach you the truest Politeness †; that emi-

* Aulus Gellius judiciously exhorts to take care to unite the benefits of improvement, with the blandishments of Pleasure and Conversation.

† The elegant author of the Essay on Conversation, advises—

“ Study with Care, Politeness: That must teach
The modish forms of gesture and of speech.

nent qualification, without which Conversation must be offensive ; with which it can never fail to be agreeable.

Politeness in the common intercourse of the world, is a subsidium to what Christian Love is, in the better system of religion and virtue. The former may be defined “ A constant attention to oblige, to do or say nothing, which may give pain or offence:” And Christian love is a continual endeavour to please, in order to promote our neighbour’s best welfare. While therefore, my young friends, you act upon the amiable principles of Christian truth, let that love especially, which is the most refined politeness, be the principal regulator of your behaviour in Conversation. “ Study always to please, in order to improve, and do good.” Good sense, good-humour, and good-breeding, unite in nearly

She moves with easy, though with measur’d pace,
And shews no part of study, but the grace ;
Yet even by This man is but half refin’d,
Unless Philosophy subdues the mind :
’Tis but a varnish, that is quickly lost,
Whene’er the soul in Passion’s sea is tost.”

the same dictate * : and if they carry not the motive so far as it is carried by Christianity, rejoice, that you have the happy, the plain direction of a Precept to form your behaviour, which is no less infallibly productive of your own internal peace and felicity, than it is certain to recommend you to the approbation and good esteem of others.

Thus too, permit me to observe, you will be enabled to promote, in a peculiar manner, the honour of that holy religion, upon which the morose and forbidding carriage of some austere and mistaken* zealots hath brought a suspicion of moroseness and unsociability.

* The chief ingredients in the composition of those good qualities, which gain esteem and praise, says Sir W. Temple, are truth, good nature, good sense, and good breeding.—Good nature is seen in a disposition to say or do what one thinks will please or profit others. Good breeding, in doing nothing one thinks will either hurt or displease them. Good nature and good sense come from our births or tempers; good breeding and truth chiefly by education and converse with men. Yet truth seems much in one's blood; and is gained too by good sense, and reflection, That nothing is a greater possession, or of more advantage to those who have it, as well as those who deal with it,

How differently will they judge of it, who see you, actuated by its divine principles, *shewing out of a good Conversation your works, with all the meekness of wisdom*; shewing that genuine and unaffected Humility, which Christian loves inspires, and which is one of the most requisite and adorning qualifications in Conversation: when they see you actuated by the first and characteristic precept of it, Love to mankind; cautious of all offence in word, abhorring profaneness, indecency, falshood, and slander; and daring no more to offend God, than to injure, in the slightest degree, the reputation of a fellow-creature: when they see you with the utmost modesty, sweetness, and gentleness of manners, hearing with attention*, replying with diffidence, and instructing, while never seeming to instruct: while they see the blush kindle on your cheeks, on any occasion of producing yourself, and mentioning your own concerns; studious to please others; careful never to pain or of-

* To make others wit appear more than one's own, a good rule in Conversation: a necessary one to let others take notice of your wit, and never do it yourself, Sir W. Temple.

send them ; and consequently, never meddling with those dangerous weapons Raillery and Humour, which too commonly cut with both edges, and wound as well the hand that strikes, as the person stricken with them * : In short, while they see you solicitous to become all things to all men, that you may engage and win them ; and anxious to introduce the most profitable “ Matter,” by the most pleasing “ Manner,” in Conversation, that you may if possible *minister Grace* ; and lead, by the paths of imitation, those who hear, to the same fountain whence you draw such a fund of satisfaction and advantage.

Many more, my young friends, are the rules, which are or may be laid down for Conversa-

* Hence the author of the Essay on Conversation advises,

“—Above all things, raillery decline,
Nature but few does for that task design :
’Tis in the ablest hand a dangerous tool,
Which never fails to wound the meddling fool :
For all must grant, it needs no common art,
To keep men patient, when we make them smart.”

These specimens from this useful poem, will be sufficient to recommend an attentive perusal of the whole. See Doddsley’s Miscell. vol. i. p. 310.

tion; one of the liveliest of our pleasures, the enlarger of our knowledge, and a principal source of our intellectual wealth. But what I have said may suffice, at once to point out the chief evils which you should avoid, and the more important qualifications which you should cultivate, in order to enjoy this pleasure in its truest perfection. Happy they, who, associated with those of similar dispositions and pursuits with themselves, cherish and enjoy this highest entertainment. Mixed with friends chosen and approved, you may discuss with infinite utility subjects of the most important nature; and such discussion, be assured, will peculiarly enlarge your minds.

Great and extensive is the round of intellectual knowledge; various and infinite the topics worthy to engage a rational attention and enquiry: and one peculiar excellence, my young friends, of such attention and enquiry, is, that while it mends and improves the mind, it preserves it at the same time from the pitiful aberrations, into which they fall, who are vacant and unemployed; or

engaged alone in the frippery pursuits of vanity, folly, and the world.

Cultivate, therefore, my young friends, rational Conversation; and let me particularly recommend, as a subject ever and most especially worthy that Conversation, the Deity and his works; his ample works in Creation and Redemption. Religious Conversation, under the restrictions laid down in the former part of this Discourse, is as we have said, and truly said, “the most noble, the most interesting, and most instructive of all others.” “A frequent conference on the Glories of the GODHEAD [I use the words of one, who well knew the sublimity and excellence of that Conversation *] or the wonders of Creation, will invigorate and ennoble the soul: will enlarge her faculties, and elevate her desires. *Did not our hearts burn within us, said the travellers at Emmaus, while HE talked with us by the way?* These discourses, it is true, were conducted with a spirit, and enforced with an energy, absolutely unequalled.

* Mr. Hervey. See Theron and Aspasio.

Yet the same happy effects would, in an inferior degree, result from our friendly conferences, if they turned upon the same important points. We also should feel our hearts warmed with holy zeal, and glowing with heavenly love. Nor would such conferences be productive of present advantage only; they would yield a renewed pleasure in the retrospect. We might reflect with real complacency, on hours spent in so rational a manner."

And as a farther motive to such Conversation, we shall do well to consider, that the infinite and eternal GOD is present at all our interviews; vouchsafes to express his satisfaction, and to acknowledge himself magnified, when with admiration and love we talk of his transcendent excellencies. Nay, we are assured, that the Lord of all Lords not only hearkens, but keeps a book of remembrance, and will distinguish such persons at the day of universal retribution. When the loose train of licentious talkers are driven away as the despicable chaff; These

shall be selected for his peculiar treasure, and numbered among the Jewels of Jehovah *.

Who then, that is wise, would not habituate himself to a practice, which comes so strongly recommended by the voice of reason, and is enforced by the authority of God? A practice, which will “administer present good”—will “afford pleasing reviews”—and “terminate in everlasting honour?”

ANECDOTES respecting CONVERSATION.

(1.) Plutarch tells us, in a few words, what an infinite advantage Alexander reaped from the fine taste wherewith his preceptor Aristotle inspired him, even from his tenderest infancy. “He loved, says our author, to converse with learned men; to improve himself in knowledge; and to study.” Three sources these, of a monarch’s happiness, which enable him to secure himself from numberless difficulties; three certain and infallible me-

* See Malachi, iii, 16, 17.

thods of learning to reign without the assistance of others. The "Conversation" of persons of fine sense instructs a prince, as it were, in the way of amusement; and teaches him a thousand curious and useful things, without costing him the least trouble. The "Lessons" inculcated by able masters, impress and wonderfully improve; and furnish him with rules to govern his subjects with wisdom; and in fine, "Study," especially that of History, crowns the whole; becomes to him a preceptor of all seasons, and for all hours; that, without growing troublesome, acquaints him with truths which no one else dare to give him; under fictitious names, exhibits him to himself, and teaches him to know, to feel and support his own character, as well as to investigate those of mankind, who are the same in all ages.

(2.) It was Mr. Locke's peculiar art in Conversation, to lead people to talk of their own profession, or whatever they best understood. With a gardener, he discoursed of gardening; with a jeweller, of diamonds;

with a chymist, of chymistry ; with a watch-maker, of clocks, watches, &c. “ By this means, said he, I please all those men, who commonly can speak pertinently upon nothing else. As they believe I have an esteem for their profession, they are charmed with shewing their abilities before me ; and I in the mean time improve myself by their discourse.” By thus putting questions to artificers, he would sometimes find out a secret in their art which they did not understand themselves ; and often give them views of the subject entirely new, which they put into practice with advantage.

(3.) The faculty of interchanging our thoughts with one another, or what we express by CONVERSATION, has always been represented by moral writers, as one of the noblest privileges of reason, and which more particularly sets mankind above the brute part of creation. Monsieur Varillas once told his friend, the author of the *Menagiana*, that out of every ten things he knew, he had learned nine

in Conversation. And I too, says M. Menage, can in a great measure declare the same. See Menag. vol. i.

(4.) The understanding of a man deprived of the converse of others, is so little exercised, and so little cultivated, that he does not think so much thereon, as he is indispensably obliged to do by external objects. The greatest fund of the Ideas of men therefore, is in their reciprocal Conversation; and we may add, one of the most fertile sources of their Comforts too. It was no ill reflection that Tully made upon the delight and pleasure men naturally have in communication,—in telling other men what they know, and what they have seen; “That if a man could get up into Heaven, and take a clear view of the Majesty thereof, and behold the beauty of the stars, and the other ornaments of the sky; *Insuavem illam admirationem ei fore; quæ jucundissima fuisset, si aliquem cui narraret habuisset*; That wonderful prospect would be even insipid, for want of somebody to

whom he might relate what he saw." Men do not see so much, because they do not mark so well, alone, as in Conversation ; and he who informs others, often teaches himself ; it being a blessing upon mental Intercourse, that new and useful thoughts occur in the act of communication.

+ (5.) Pliny, in one of his elegant epistles, speaking of his friend Iseus, says, " Authors you may turn over at any time ; but you cannot always have an opportunity of hearing Iseus. We are infinitely more affected with what we hear, than with what we read. There is something in the voice, the countenance, the habit, and the gesture of the speaker, that concurs in fixing an impression upon the mind, and gives this method of instruction greatly the advantage of any thing one can receive from books." See B. 2. Lett. 3. Melmoth.

(6.) The utility and excellence of rational conversation cannot perhaps be expressed in

words more beautiful and elegant than the following, by Dr. Young.

Good sense will stagnate. Thoughts shut up
want air,
And spoil, like bales unopen'd to the sun.
Had Thought been all, sweet Speech had been
deny'd;
Speech, Thought's canal! Speech, Thought's
criterion too!
Thought in the mine, may come forth gold,
or dross;
When coin'd in words, we know its real worth.
If sterling, store it for thy future use;
'Twill buy thee benefit, perhaps renown.
Thought too deliver'd, is the more possess'd;
Teaching we learn; and giving we retain
The births of Intellect; when dumb, forgot.
Speech ventilates our intellectual fire;
Speech burnishes our mental magazine;
Brightens for ornament, and whets for use.
What numbers, sheath'd in erudition, lie,
Plung'd to the hilts in venerable tomes,
And rusted in; who might have borne an edge,
And play'd a sprightly beam, if born to Speech;

If born blest heirs of half their mother's tongue?
 'Tis thoughts exchange, which, like th'alter-
 nate push

Of waves conflicting, breaks the learned scum,
 And defecates the student's standing pool.

Rude Thought runs wild in Contemplation's
 field;

Converse, the menage, breaks it to the bit
 Of due restraint; and Emulation's spur
 Gives graceful energy, by rivals aw'd.

'Tis Converse qualifies for solitude,
 As exercise, for salutary rest.

Night 2.

(7.) Solomon tells us, that " he who walk-
 eth with wise men will be wise." 'Tis not
 so only in matters of Religion; it extends to
 every circumstance of life. Conversation
 with men of polite genius, is a certain method
 for improving our natural taste; for adorning
 and enriching the mind. " It is impossible (says
 Mr. Addison) for a man of the greatest parts
 to consider any thing in its whole extent, and
 in all its variety of lights. Every man, be-
 sides those general observations which are to

be made upon an author, forms several reflections, that are peculiar to his own manner of thinking: so that Conversation will naturally furnish us with hints which we did not attend to, and make us enjoy other men's parts and reflections, as well as our own. This is the best reason I can give for the observation which several have made, that men of great genius in the same way of writing, seldom rise up singly, but at certain periods of time appear together, and in a body; as they did at Rome, in the reign of Augustus, and in Greece about the age of Socrates. I cannot think that Corneille, Racine, Moliere, Boileau, La Fontaine, Bruyere, Bossu, or the Daciers, would have written so well as they have done, had they not been friends and contemporaries." Spectator, No. 409.

(8.) Of all the inconveniencies attending the intercourse of mankind, Slander and Detraction are the most frequent, and in a very high degree odious and detestable. We are told of St. Bernard, that when he was drawing near his end, he thus solemnly addressed

himself to his brethren; as a dying man bequeathing legacies to his friends. “ Three things I require you to keep and observe; which I remember to have kept, to the best of my power, as long as I have lived. 1. I have not willed to slander any person; and if any have fallen, I have hid it as much as possible. 2. I have ever trusted less to my own wit and understanding than to any other’s. 3. If I were at any time hurt, harmed, and annoyed, I never wished vengeance against the party who so wronged me.” This memorable sentence is peculiarly applicable to every branch of the present subject; Defamation, insolent Overbearing, and petulant Animosity, being the chief ingredients that tend to embitter Conversation, and preclude its improvement and advantage.

(9.) It is always a certain sign of an ill heart, to be inclined to defamation. They who are harmless and innocent, can have no gratification that way; but it ever arises from a neglect of what is laudable in a man’s self, and an impatience of seeing it in another.

How wretchedly low and contemptible is that state of mind which cannot be pleased, but by what is the subject of just lamentation? This temper has ever been in the highest degree odious to gallant spirits, and ought to be scouted from every society of men. The Persian souldier, who was over-heard reviling Alexander the Great, was well admonished by his officer, in those memorable words. "Sir, you are paid to fight against Alexander, and not to rail at him *."

(10.) Cicero, in one of his pleadings, defending his client from general scandal, says very handsomely, and with much reason, "There are many who have particular engagements to the prosecutor: there are many who are known to have ill will to him for whom I appear; there are many who are naturally addicted to defamation, and envious of any good to any man, who may have contributed to spread reports of this kind. For nothing is so swift as scandal; nothing is more

* See a well written Letter on this subject in the Christian's Magazine, vol. iv. p. 411—413.

easily sent abroad ; nothing received with more welcome ; nothing diffuses itself so universally *. I shall not desire, that if any report to our disadvantage has any ground for it, you would overlook or extenuate it. But, if there be any thing advanced, without a person who can say whence he had it ; or, which is attested by one who forgot who told it him, or, who had it from one of so little consideration, that he did not then think it worth his notice ; all such testimonies as these, I know you will think too slight, to have any credit against the innocence and honour of our fellow citizens." What an admirable rule and criterion of Conversation is this ! When an ill report is traced, it very often vanishes among such as the orator has here recited : and how despicable a creature must that be, who is in pain for what passes among so frivolous a people ! Spectator, No. 427.

(11.) Few have more happily expressed themselves on the topick in question than

* See the Beauties of Shakespear, vol. i. p. 55 and 203.

Epictetus. “ Consider with yourself seriously, says he, what figure is most fit for you to make in the world ; and then fix upon a method and rule in order hereunto ; which be sure to observe nicely, both at home alone, and abroad in company.—At all publick entertainments, and in mixed companies, keep a strict guard upon yourself, lest you be infected with rude and vulgar Conversation ; For know, that though a man be ever so clear himself, yet by frequenting company that are tainted, he will of necessity contract some pollution from them. Above all things take care not to talk of other people ; neither so as to censure their conduct, nor to be lavish in their commendation, nor to make invidious comparisons between one and another. In familiar conversation with your friends and acquaintance, do not make it your business to entertain the company with tedious narratives of yourself, and your own affairs. Consider that their sensations and yours are very different upon these occasions ; and though the exploits by which you have signalized yourself, the successes you have obtained, the

dangers you have encountered, or the afflictions you have undergone, may be a very agreeable story to Yourself to tell, yet it will not be equally so for Others to hear.—As little will it become you to render yourself the common Buffoon, and be always trying to make the company laugh; for this is a very nice and ticklish thing, exceedingly apt to degenerate into vice and folly; and, observe it when you will, he that only studies men's Diversion, shall be sure at the same time to lose their Respect.—Of all kind of discourse, none is more unsafe, none more despicable than that, which breaks in upon Modesty and good manners: whenever therefore any person in your presence flies out into Obscenity, if so great a liberty can decently be taken, reprove him publickly, and put a stop to the lewd talk. But if that cannot conveniently be done, do yourself the justice to disapprove it; and, by forbearing to join with him, by blushing for him, and by chiding looks, let all the company see plainly, that you detest his filthy ribaldry.”

{12.} Eusebius was a man of sense, of politeness, and of unaffected piety : it often shocked him to find in the common intercourses of life, that Christians, who are forbidden to swear by any thing, assumed a liberty of swearing by all things. One would think the breach of a divine precept was the only design they aimed at, and disobedience to God's commands their only diversion ; as if, truly, it were some notable exploit to lay down the language of their country, and take up that of the damn'd. Eusebius could not endure this execrable jargon. A thousand good qualities in a person, made no atonement in his opinion for this only bad one ; and though he pitied those failures, that favour'd of weakness, he never gave quarter to blasphemy. " Other vices, said he, make bold with God's commands, this outrages his very person ; it adds insult to disobedience, and contempt to abuse : it is a symptom of absolute irreligion. For who will revile the very Being he adores ? or rally and worship the same object ? And what respect, satis-

faction, or credit can we expect to derive from him, who turns upon his Creator, and flies in the face of the Omnipotent ?”

(13.) Neander was an excellent foldier, he feared nothing but Fear ; he always chofe the van, and was often the firft man on the breach. All admired his courage, and praifed it ; and even thofe who difapproved his conduct, did juftice to his valour. This gentleman however, unfortunately managed it fo, as to lofe at the table the glory he won in the field ; and by talking away in his winter quarters, diffipated the honour he had purchafed in the whole campaign. In fhort, he was a moft infufferable Egotift. “ I did this, faid he, at the fieve of R——, and this at the battle of D——. Had not I feized on fuch a poft at * * *, the army had been in danger.” One would have thought all the generals and foldiers had been in garrifon, and that Neander, with his fmall brigade alone, had defeated the defigns of the French. This over-grown vanity coft him dear : inftead of gaining the

reputation of a General, he went off with that of a Fop ; and all concluded, that he was too ambitious of praise, to deserve any. Deep rivers move with a silent majesty ; shallow brooks alone make a noise and tumult among the pebbles. The great marshal de Turenne never spoke of himself, but when forced, and even then with modesty : and though the king was wholly indebted to the wise conduct of this gallant man for many victories, yet Turenne never was the man to blazon it ; on the contrary, he would lay his Miscarriages at his own door, and Success at that of his officers and soldiers. This made him appear great even in his overthrow ; and generally his moderation was more glorious to him than victory. Imitate the silence of this hero, not the noisy impertinence of fools. Carry off the satisfaction of performing great actions, and let others acquire and enjoy the honour of praising them. For he that exalteth himself shall be abased, while they only who humble themselves, shall be exalted.

(14.) It was wholesome counsel which an old gentleman gave to his young friend; "Avoid, my dear sir, the modish rant of Oaths and imprecations: it is an ungentle dialect, as well as unchristian, and clashes both with the rules of breeding, and of the gospel. Custom, indeed, has made them fashionable, but neither can make them civil or lawful; for vice can never plead prescription. In a word, whatever jars with religion and attacks good breeding, is below a gentleman; and therefore, in spite of example and practice, I must caution you against some parts of English civility; for though they pass by consent in the English dominions, they will not bear the test of other nations. I know some are ready to throw a veil on those bear-garden expressions, so frequent in conversation, and to wash over their impiety with fair pretences. But, still, Sir, the silliness of the excuse cannot stifle the monstrous incivility of the compliment. For, though it may signify nothing to him who receives it as words of course; it will signify much to him who uttered it, when possibly he himself has forgot it.

Though a friend may let such curses fall to the ground, God will put them to account; and though they stand for cyphers in England, they may purchase eternal torments in hell *."

(15.) A prudent man will avoid talking much of any particular science, for which he is remarkably famous. There is not a handsomer thing said of Mr. Cowley, in his whole life, than that none but his intimate friends ever discovered he was a great Poet, by his discourse. Besides the decency of this rule, it is certainly founded in that good policy of which Mr. Locke, as abovementioned, so well availed himself. A man who talks of any thing he is already famous for, has little to get, but a great deal to lose.

(16.) Notwithstanding all the advantages of youth, few young people please in conver-

* For some close reflections addressed to a person of distinction and otherwise very amiable, but a common swearer; the reader is referred to the Christian's Magazine, vol. ii. p. 480.

sation. The reason is, that want of experience makes them positive; and what they say is rather with a design to please themselves, than to edify or entertain any one else. If there can be any thing more silly than this, it is the strange pleasure some illiberal people take, in what they call "speaking their minds." A man of this stamp will say a rude thing for the mere pleasure of saying it, when an opposite behaviour, full as sensible and more innocent, might have preserved his friend, or made his fortune.

(17.) Sir Richard Steele observes, that there are some men who on all occasions, in all companies, talk in the same circle and round of chat as they have picked up in their daily peregrinations. I remember, says he, at a full table in the city, one of these ubiquitary wits was entertaining the company with a Soliloquy (for so I call it, when a man talks to those who do not understand him) concerning Wit and Humour. An honest gentleman, who sat next to me, and was worth half a plumb, stared at him; and

observing there was some sense, as he thought, mixed with his impertinence, whispered me, "Take my word for it, this fellow is more knave than fool." This was all my good friend's applause of the wittiest man of talk that I was ever present at, which wanted nothing to make it excellent, but that there was no occasion for it. See Tatler, No. 244.

(18.) The same ingenious author has the following remarks on loquacity. I look upon a tedious talker, or what is generally known by the name of "a story-teller," to be much more insufferable, than even a prolix writer. An Author may be tossed out of your hand, and thrown aside, when he grows dull and tiresome; but such liberties are so far from being allowed towards these Orators in common Conversation, that I have known a challenge sent a person, for going out of the room abruptly, and leaving a man of honour in the midst of a dissertation. The life of man is too short for a story-teller. Methusalem might be half an hour in telling

what o'clock it was : But for us Postdiluvians, we ought to do every thing in haste ; and in our speeches as well as actions remember, that our time is short. I would establish but one great general rule to be observed in all Conversation, which is this, “ That men should not talk to please themselves, but those that hear them.” This would make them consider, whether what they speak be worth hearing ; whether there be either wit or sense in what they are about to say ; and whether it be adapted to the Time when, the Place where, and the Person to whom it is spoken.

(19.) A certain celebrated nobleman, speaking of another, remarkable in Conversation for his loquacity and manner of address, observed, “ That he was always too big for his company.” This fault is not a whit the less unpardonable, for being so very common : it is neither good-natured, nor just, nor decent ; but the certain mark of a deficient judgment. Good-nature is more agreeable in Conversation than Wit, and gives a certain air to the countenance which is more

amiable than Beauty. It shews virtue in the fairest light; takes off in some measure from the deformity of vice, and makes even folly and impertinence supportable.

(20.) “ I remember, says lord Herbert, that at the time I was about seven years old, I was corrected for going to cuffs with two school-fellows, being both elder than myself; but never for telling a lye, or any other fault; my natural disposition and inclination being so contrary to all falshood, that, being demanded whether I had committed any fault whereof I might be justly suspected, I did use ever to confess it freely; and thereupon choosing rather to suffer correction, than to stain my mind with telling a lye, which I did judge then, no time could ever deface; and I can affirm to all the world truly, that from my first infancy to this hour, I told not willingly any thing that was false, my soul naturally having an antipathy to lying and deceit.” See his Life, written by himself, p. 23.

(21.) Zeno the philosopher being present, when a person of a loquacious disposition play'd himself off, said, with an air of concern in his countenance, " I perceive that poor gentleman is ill. He has a violent flux upon him." The company was alarmed; and the rhetorician stopped in his career: " Yes," added Zeno, " The flux is so violent, that it has carried his ears into his tongue."

(22.) The significance and importance of frivolous, trifling Conversation was smartly represented by a philosopher: who being ask'd how he left the company employed, made answer, " Some in milking the ram; others in holding the pail,"

S E R M O N XVI.

On Friendship.

JOHN xiii. 23.

Now there was leaning on Jesus's bosom, One of his disciples, whom Jesus loved.

PLEASURE, to be really such, must be the matter of our own free choice, our voluntary election: whatever is commanded, immediately becomes DUTY: and though by the goodness and wisdom of the Commander, the paths of duty may lead to those of pleasantness, as in the case of religion; yet, strictly and properly speaking, Pleasure can never be enjoined by any authority, can never submit to the bonds of obligation.

A want of attention to this obvious remark, has drawn from the pen of a noble writer †, an unwary censure upon the gospel of Christ,

† Lord Shaftsbury.

as if it were extremely deficient, “ In having no where enjoined or required the exercise of FRIENDSHIP; a virtue, says he, the most amiable and excellent; which Epicurus himself taught and practised; and whose morality, he would insinuate from thence, is preferable to that of Jesus Christ.”

We entirely agree, my young friends, with the noble writer, that no virtue can be more amiable and excellent than Friendship; no pleasures more refined and chearing, than those which Friendship affords. We mean to recommend them, as the most valuable acquisition, as the highest enjoyment of your lives. But at the same time, we do not, we cannot enjoin them as a Duty; we cannot bind them upon you, as indispensable Obligations: Nor, if you should miss of the pleasures of Friendship, if you should not be able to find that pearl of great price, a real Friend, shall we therefore condemn you as a criminal, or adjudge you as guilty of an act of sin.

For "Friendship [we will take lord Shaftsbury's own definition] is that peculiar relation, which is formed by a consent and harmony of minds, by mutual esteem, and reciprocal tenderness and affection *." Never therefore, can Friendship be considered or enjoined as an indispensable Duty, since our lot in life may never cast us amongst those, whose minds may harmonize with our own: and consequently the Gospel could not enforce it as a duty. Friendship is rather to be considered as a rare and singular Blessing, vouchsafed perhaps to few, but when vouchsafed, one of the most exquisite cordials in human life. 'Tis true, there are certain Virtues necessary to the preservation and continuance of Friendship, once engaged in, of which we shall hereafter speak, and the want whereof is highly criminal. But the Gospel, as we shall find, very strictly requires and enjoins these Virtues.

* Friendship has been otherwise well defined, "An union between just and good men, in their joint interest and concernment, and for the advancement thereof."

But though this be the exact state of the case, though Friendship, considered as a peculiar and affectionate relation, formed by consent and harmony of minds, could never be enforced under penal sanctions as a duty, in the gospel, or any system of morals: Yet they surely must be very blind, and very inattentive, who assert, that even this kind of Friendship is taken no notice of in our blessed religion. The EXAMPLE of the great Founder of our faith contradicts the assertion in the strongest manner. JESUS, whose heart was warm with all the most commendable and generous affections of the human nature, felt, approved, and recommended “the felicity of particular Friendship.” You have frequent mention of “HIS FRIEND” in the gospel, under the striking appellation of *the disciple, whom Jesus loved*. Jesus undoubtedly loved all his disciples, loved all mankind; but the love which he bore to this happy disciple, this favoured JOHN, was of another and a different kind. His love to all the world was a love of benevolence and good will: His love to John was

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a love of tenderness and affection, formed by a peculiar consent and harmony of minds; “ was the love of friend to friend.”

St. John, however, doth not seem to have been the only person whom our blessed Lord distinguished in this manner; he appears to have had a peculiar Friendship for Lazarus also. *Lord, behold, HE WHOM THOU LOVEST is sick,* was the message which the afflicted sisters sent to Jesus; and which evidently expresses his tender and particular regard. Indeed all of this amiable family appear to have shared the peculiar Friendship of Christ. *He LOVED Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus,* the sacred writer tells us; and when, compassionate and tender-hearted, He wept over the grave of the latter, the remark of those who stood by was, *Behold, how He LOVED him!* In all which places, the words cannot be understood of that general Philanthropy or good-will which Jesus bore, and all his followers are enjoin'd to bear, towards each other; but of that “ peculiar love,” that affection and tenderness which we feel for

individuals, and which constitutes the “peculiar relation of Friendship.”

Thus you learn, my young friends, (the more to recommend the virtue to you,) that Friendship is enforced by the gospel, and in the only manner by which it could be enforced; namely, by the example of Him, whom it is your duty, as it will be your highest happiness, to follow. And we may perhaps, on this view of the subject, without any danger adopt that noble writer's words, when he says, “I could be almost tempted to think, that the true reason why some of the most heroic virtues (as Friendship, &c.) have so little notice taken of them in our holy religion, is, because there would have been so little room left for *disinterestedness*, had they been entitled to a share of that infinite reward, which providence has by revelation assigned to other duties*.” A remark, doubtless, in a great measure just, so far as “peculiar Friendship” is concerned;

* See the Characteristics, vol. i.

which being no Duty, can never be entered into on the view of future Rewards ; which the utmost disinterestedness only can render truly sincere ; and the immediate purpose of which seems to be the augmentation of our private happiness in this life. Though certainly, it must be allowed, that the Christian Religion sublimates Friendship to the highest perfection, by uniting souls in such a bond of amity, as, they are assured, time itself can never destroy. Whence we learn, that true Christian Friendship, founded on Virtue, on which all real friendship must be founded, is, and must necessarily be superior to all friendship under every other system ; because a friendship of this kind looks with confidence beyond the grave, and triumphs in a certain Eternity.

I must not, however, omit to observe, my young friends, (to corroborate at least what I have advanced,) that as we acknowledge and hold the Divinity of the Old Testament, as well as of the New ; so to shew the perfect agreement and conformity of each with the

other, we may collect from thence both precepts * and examples of this divine virtue. Eminently pleasing and heroic was the Friendship of David and Jonathan. *I am distressed for thee, my brother Jonathan,* says the plaintive and surviving David; *Very pleasant hast thou been unto me; thy love to me was wonderful; passing the love of women!* Indeed we must not expect to meet with many examples of this kind: True friendship is rare; hath ever been rare in the world, so many qualifications are necessary to form and compleat it. It was enough for a David to find one Jonathan.

What has been thus far advanced appears to me sufficient to vindicate the Gospel, and to fix the right notion of Friendship. But before I proceed, permit me just to remark, that some by Friendship mean only "that benevolence, which unites virtuous minds in the sacred bands of a special, cordial affection." And thus understood, never was

* See particularly the book of *Proverbs*.

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Friendship more strongly recommended, and enforced, than by the gospel of Jesus Christ; which requires us to love and to do good to all mankind. In this sense Bishop Taylor * observes well, that "Christian charity is Friendship to all the world." And certainly, this charity, or love, is enjoined in the new Testament in the most forcible and exalted manner imaginable : *Hereby perceive We the love of God*, says St. John, *because He* [Jesus Christ, the God-Man] *layed down his life for us* : *And We* [after the example of such consummate love] *ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.*

Now though no benevolence can be carried to a nobler height, yet there seems to me no doubt, that particular Friendship is different from this general Benevolence ; which requires the same love of good-will and brotherly service to all our fellow Christians. Whereas particular Friendship is an immediate attachment of the mind to a person

* See his *Opuscula*, &c.

peculiarly chosen and beloved ; for whom you have not only this general benevolence, but a tenderness and affection interesting you more especially in every thing which concerns him. It must however be allowed, that the high principle of Christian Benevolence prevailing in the heart, is one of the best preparatives, as it is the noblest foundation for private Friendship.

Besides, it should be remarked, that universal as the benevolence of our minds ought to be, that benevolence in its exercise must be contracted within the sphere of those amongst whom we dwell : and the nature of the human heart is such, where it is not frozen up by chilling Selfishness, that it bears us warmly and irresistibly to near and private connections, in which we may freely repose ourselves, and find rest : Where we may communicate our more intimate feelings, and by the reciprocal tenderness of affection, live to, and enjoy as it were, a second self*.

* *Est enim verus Amicus, tanquam alter Idem. Cicero,*

Intending man for social happiness, God, in great wisdom and goodness, gave this impulse to the human heart : and with equal wisdom and goodness, He hath provided a variety of near and dear relations, in which man may freely allow to himself the full exercise of this heaven-implanted impulse. One of these is “ Friendship :” Right and commendable in itself, as we may fairly gather from this natural propensity of the uncorrupted heart to it *. But that heart bears yet another testimony to the propriety and excellence of Friendship, by the tacit approbation which it immediately gives to, and the genuine respect and esteem which it immediately feels for those worthy Pairs, whose names are handed down to posterity by the faithful historian, as eminent in this virtue, and peculiarly distinguished for their reciprocal affection †. And the heart rarely errs

* Facile indicabat natura vim suam, &c.—Una est enim Amicitia in rebus humanis, de cujus utilitate omnes uno ore consentiunt.

Cicero de Amicitia.

† See the Anecdotes, No. 4. Ex omnibus sæculis vix tria aut quatuor nominantur paria amicorum, &c. says Cicero,

or misleads us, in hints and admonitions of this kind. Here it is eminently faithful: for the friendship which we thus as it were involuntarily approve and admire, is unquestionably, my young friends, one of the most singular pleasures and comforts of the human life.

+ For think, what a pleasure, what a comfort it is to have one in perfect amity with you, to whom you can at all times unbofom yourself with confidence and with safety! with whom you can enjoy all the refinements and the peculiar pleasures of rational conversation *! One, who will tenderly enter into and share all your griefs;—One, who will kindly participate in all your joys, thus heightening the one, and alleviating the other! What a pleasure to have a Friend, upon the wisdom and fidelity of whose coun-

in his treatise of Friendship; from whence I shall quote the more sparingly, as I could wish to recommend a frequent perusal of the whole.

* See p. 81.

fels you can surely rely in all your difficulties, in all your embarrassments; whose power and interest will always be ready to succour and assist; or whose love, at least, will always be forward to console, to delight, to cheer and refresh you! Providence gives nothing in mortal life more valuable, than such a friend *! But the difficulty of the acquisition is proportionate to the value: For, as we observed, nothing in mortal life is more rare: nor can we wonder at this, when we consider not only the state of the world, and the general attachment of men to self-interest, but the variety of particulars necessary to render Friendship firm and endearing.

I cannot express my own sentiments better, or advise you, my young friends, more fully of the difficulties which attend the acquisition of real Friendship, than in the words

* Solem è mundo tollere videntur, qui amicitiam à vitâ tollunt: quâ a Diis immortalibus nihil melius habemus, nihil jucundius, &c.—Cicero.

of one of the most masterly writers of the age *. “ When Socrates, says he, was building himself a house at Athens, being asked by one, that observed the littleness of the design, why a man so eminent would not have an abode more suitable to his dignity; he replied, “ That he should think himself “ sufficiently accommodated, if he could see “ that narrow habitation filled with real “ friends.” Such was the opinion of this great master of human life, concerning the infrequency of such an union of minds, as might deserve the name of Friendship. So many qualities are indeed requisite to the possibility of Friendship, and so many accidents must concur to its rise and its continuance, that the greatest part of mankind content themselves without it, and supply its place as they can, with interest and dependance.

“ Multitudes are unqualified for a constant and warm reciprocation of benevolence, as

* Dr. Johnson, in the Rambler, vol. ii.

they are incapacitated for any other elevated excellence, by perpetual attention to their Interest, and unresisting subjection to their Passions!—But not only this hateful and confirmed corruption, but many varieties of disposition not inconsistent with common degrees of virtue, may exclude Friendship from the heart. Some, ardent enough in their benevolence, and defective neither in officiousness nor liberality, are mutable and uncertain; soon attracted by new objects, disgusted without offence, and alienated without enmity.—Others are soft and flexible; easily influenced by reports and whisperers; ready to catch alarms from every dubious circumstance, and to listen to every suspicion which envy and flattery shall suggest; to follow the opinion of every confident adviser, and move by the impulse of the last breath.—Some are impatient of contradiction; more willing to go wrong by their own judgment, than to be indebted for a better or a safer way to the sagacity of another; inclined to consider counsel as insult, and enquiry as want of confidence;

and to confer their regard on no other terms than unreserved submission and implicit compliance.—Some are dark and involved, equally careful to conceal good and bad purposes; and pleased with producing effects by invisible means, and shewing their design only in its execution. Others are universally communicative, alike open to every eye, and equally profuse of their own secrets, and those of others; without the necessary vigilance of caution, or the honest art of prudent integrity; ready to accuse without malice, and to betray without treachery.—Any of these may be useful to the community, and pass through the world with the reputation of good purposes and uncorrupted morals: but they are unfit for close and tender Intimacies. He cannot properly be chosen for a Friend, whose kindness is exhaled by its own warmth, or frozen by the first blast of slander: He cannot be a useful Counsellor, who will hear no opinion but his own: He will not much invite confidence, whose principal maxim is to suspect; nor can the candour and frankness of that

man be much esteemed, who spreads his arms to human kind, and makes every man without distinction a denizen of his bosom."

You see, my young friends, from the above fine picture of human dispositions,—drawn by the strong pencil of this great moral master,—what difficulties attend the acquisition of a real and constant friend. Yours, indeed, is that period of life, when this acquisition is most commonly made, and made most firmly. Friendships contracted in youth, as most sincere, are generally most lasting. The heart, in that happy season, unpolluted by the vices, and unhackneyed in the ways of the world, obeys without reserve its natural propensity, and cleaves with undissembled sincerity to similar sincerity with its own. Sameness of temper and sentiment unites youthful minds, without any views of interest, without any shew of design; and as the loadstone draws the iron, almost irresistably attracts them*.

* Great Souls by Instinct to each other turn,
Demand Alliance, and in FRIENDSHIP burn.

Indulge, my young friends, the pleasing, the generous impulse: But, that the Friendships thus begun in youth, may last through life, and sooth you to the close with their pleasures and their comforts, Suffer me to admonish you of that foundation, which alone can render Friendship firm and lasting. "It is VIRTUE:" the only sure and solid basis whereon it can be built.† If founded on other and less worthy motives, its continuance is short, precarious; and as those motives shift and vary, it will vary with them, like the vane with the wind. Indeed such unions deserve not the name of Friendship; they are and should be deemed Confederacies only, so much the more dangerous and hurtful, as the causes uniting are more mean and vicious.

"No, my young friends, that "Friendship" may at once be fond and lasting, there must not only be equal VIRTUE on each part, but virtue of the same kind: not only the same end must be proposed, but the same means must be approved by both. We are

† Nec sine Virtute Amicitia esse ullo pacto potest, &c, Cicero.

often, by superficial accomplishments, and accidental endearments, induced to love those whom we cannot esteem; we are sometimes, by great abilities and incontestible evidences of virtue, compelled to esteem those, whom we cannot love. But Friendship compounded of esteem and love, derives from one its "Tenderness," and its "Permanence" from the other; and therefore requires not only that its candidates should gain the Judgment, but that they should attract the affections: that they should not only be firm in the day of distress, but gay in the hour of prosperity: not only useful in exigencies, but pleasing and familiar in social life. Their presence should give cheerfulness as well as courage, and dispell alike the gloom of fear and of melancholy.

"To this mutual and virtuous complacency, is generally requisite an uniformity of Opinions; at least of those active and conspicuous principles, which discriminate parties in government, and sects in religion; and which every day operate more or less in the

common business of life. Wherever these differences subsist, debates will arise,—vehemence, acrimony, and vexation, and in time an utter extinction of benevolence. Exchange of endearments and intercourse of civility may continue, indeed, as boughs may for a while be verdant, when the root is wounded; but the poison of discord is infused, and though the countenance may preserve its smile, the heart is hardening and contracting*.”

But besides *virtue*, and virtue of the same kind, similarity of dispositions, and leading opinions †, there are many other qualifica-

* See the Rambler, as before.

† I say *leading opinions*; a likeness of opinion and inclination is so far from being requisite to form a benevolence in two minds towards each other, as is generally imagined, that I believe we shall find some of the firmest friendships to have been contracted between persons of different humours; the mind being often pleased with those perfections which are new to it, and which it does not find among its own accomplishments. Besides that a man in some measure supplies his own defects, and fancies himself at second hand possessed of those good qualities and endow-

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tions requisite to the refinement and perfection of Friendship : Such as, an openness and frankness of temper, joined at the same time with great faithfulness, prudence, and discretion ; a constancy and firmness of mind, an evenness of behaviour ; a suavity of manners † ; an absence of all jealousy ; a readiness to overlook little faults and foibles ; and an exquisite and generous sensibility of soul ; In short, all the dispositions which are directly opposite to those we have mentioned before, as incapacitating for close and tender intimacies : Dispositions, my young friends, partly the produce of a kind and indulgent nature, and partly of virtuous and religious culture : rarely, it is true, found combining in one character, but where found, and approved by just observation and long acquaintance, the solid ground-

ments, which are in the possession of him, who in the eye of the world is looked upon as his *other self*. See the Spectator.

† Cicero says, *Accedat autem Suavitas quædam oportet sermonum atque morum haud quaquam mediocriter condimentum amicitiae.*

work of the most pleasing, the most useful, and the most permanent Friendship.

Let us not however forget, while we specify these many good qualities, as necessary to be found in the person of a "true Friend," that if we mean to obtain that blessing, we are under every obligation to cultivate those good qualities in Ourselves. Here then, my young friends, you discern one of the singular advantages of virtuous Friendship: It peculiarly and almost necessarily conduces to your own improvement in virtue. For, as no Friendship can either be real or lasting, which is not founded as well as cemented by that Virtue, and those good qualities above enumerated, it follows, that our entrance on this delightful union must encourage the cultivation of every right and amiable principle in the soul, and our continuance in it promote that cultivation, and bring all such principles to their noblest perfection. Two virtuous minds will stimulate each other in every laudable proceeding; will guard each other from every wrong propen-

fity, and criminal deviation: will prove a mutual support, and never dare either of them to commit an action, which the other will hear of with concern, or behold with a blush. Nay, indeed, by the very force of imitation alone, their virtues will grow and increase: for there is no principle in our composition more natural, than the almost insensible imitation of those whom we esteem and admire, and with whom we are frequently conversant. Of such consequence, in every view, to your preservation and improvement in the path of duty, is virtuous, disinterested Friendship.

Nor is this affectionate union of less utility for the improvement of the lesser virtues, the graces of life, the arts of pleasing, so important to our complete enjoyment of the blessings of Friendship; which when we find to depend so much on the "amiable attentions," and good dispositions of our friend, we shall surely be solicitous to excel in those attentions, and to be-

come amiable in proportion as we wish to be loved.

But to enumerate all the advantages and all the pleasures of Friendship * would far exceed my limits ;—that Friendship, which gives to human life its highest zest and relish ; which affords to virtue a strong support and encouragement ; and which is enforced and recommended by the highest example, that of the blessed Redeemer. Well, therefore, may we say, with the wise man †, “ A faith-

* It is not possible to separate the *advantages* of Friendship from Friendship itself : but it does not therefore follow, that Friendship is an *interested* thing. The truth is, that real Friendship cannot be entered upon or continue sincere, *where* views of *worldly interest* alone lead to the union ; but we can never enjoy true Friendship without great profit, as well as great pleasure. So true is Cicero's assertion, that *Non utilitatem amicitia, sed utilitas amicitiam consecuta est.*

† See the Ecclesiastes, c. vi. v. 14. Mr. Addison has given a fine illustration (in the Spectator, No. 68.) of some passages in this excellent book, “ which, he observes,

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ful friend is a strong defence, and he that hath found such a one hath found a treasure. Nothing doth countervail a faithful friend, and his excellency is invaluable. A faithful friend is "the medicine of life;" and they that fear the Lord shall find Him. Whoso feareth the Lord, shall direct his Friendship aright: For as He is, so shall his Friend be:" that is, pious and virtuous as He is himself, He shall meet with a friend equally virtuous and pious to reward and bless Him!

Cultivate, therefore, my dear young friends, on every account cultivate virtuous Friendship: so will you assuredly cultivate Virtue and true Religion itself*! But as this inestimable jewel is so rare, "you cannot be too

would be regarded by our modern wits as one of the most shining tracts of morality extant, if it appeared under the name of a Confucius, or of any celebrated Grecian philosopher."

* Virtus, virtus inquam, conciliat amicitias, & conservat.
Cicero.

slow and cautious in your choice." Let me therefore advise, that "you run not on a sudden into intimacies." The most frank and generous spirits are the most liable to this error. They are often struck with the appearance of some shining qualities, in those who are strangers to them; affect the acquaintance of such persons, and an intimacy with them; the beginning of which perhaps greatly increases their affection, and carries them farther than discretion allows, and which a thorough acquaintance with the admired character convinces them was much too far. "If therefore thou wouldst get a friend, (in the words of the Son of Sirach,) prove Him first, and be not hasty to credit Him: for some man is a friend for his own occasion, and will not abide in the day of thy trouble: and there is a friend, who being turned to enmity and strife, will discover thy reproach*."

* See Eccclus. chap. vi. ver. 7. Cicero too advises, *Sine igitur firmi, & stabiles & constantes eligendi: judicare difficile est sanè nisi expertum: experiendum autem est in ipsa amicitia, &c.* See also Duchal's Sermons, vol. ii.

But, when you have once entered into this endearing relation; when, either in consequence of the pleasing, disinterested attachments of youth, or of more mature choice and deliberation *, you have gained that singular and choice blessing of an heart-

* Young people, at the early periods of life, commonly look upon each other as all *equals*: in which view Friendships, and very sincere ones, may be formed amongst those who are very unequal in Station. But in general, Friendship should be formed amongst equals, to be lasting; as is well observed by the Rambler. " Friendship, says he, is seldom lasting, but between equals, or where the superiority on one side is reduced by some equivalent advantage on the other. Benefits which cannot be repaid, and obligations which cannot be discharged, are not commonly found to increase affection; they excite gratitude indeed, and heighten veneration, but commonly take away that easy freedom, and familiarity of intercourse, without which, though there may be fidelity, and zeal, and admiration, there cannot be Friendship. Thus imperfect are all earthly blessings! The great effect of Friendship is beneficence, yet by the first act of uncommon kindness it is endangered, like plants that bear their fruit and die. Yet this consideration ought not to restrain bounty, or repress compassion: for duty is to be preferred before convenience; and he that loses part of the pleasures of Friendship by his generosity, gains, in its place the gratulation of his conscience."

approved friend; felicitate your lot; and to secure the comfort, study to approve yourself by every worthy action, by every thing which may bespeak your esteem, affection, and confidence. *Be in peace with many; nevertheless have but one counsellor* [one bosom friend] *of a thousand* *. Abhor, as the bane of friendship, that worldly wisdom which advises, “always to behave to your Friend, as supposing he may one day become your Enemy †.” Away with that unworthy counsel, throwing the coldness of suspicion into the generous warmth of undisguised Friendship; which is always frank, unreserved, and open. Rather, therefore, my young friends, be this your rule: Always behave to your friend in such a manner as is consistent with the highest, purest virtue; with the most disinterested affection, and the tenderest esteem; that if a breach should ever

* Eccius, c. vi. v. 6.

† Scipio negabat ullam vocem inimiciorem amicitiae potuisse reperiri, quam ejus qui dixisset, ita amare oportere, ut si aliquando esset ofusus, &c. Cicero.

unfortunately be made between you, you may freely lay open to God and man the honest and generous breast, where truth and innocence defy all the attacks of shame and reproach.

Among the qualifications requisite for perfect Friendship, we recommended "Evenness or Constancy of behaviour." If you mean to keep your friend, by all means preserve this conduct towards him. Those inconstant humourists, who are ever fluctuating, ever unsettled, are incapable either of the truth or the fine feelings of Friendship. But a Constancy in virtue is no less necessary than in behaviour; it is of great utility, on many occasions, to know how to refuse. Unlimited compliance is weakness. What is right and fit must ever be your rule: for the obligations of Virtue are prior to the obligations of Friendship *. And, agreeably to

* Nulla est igitur excusatio peccati, si amici causa peccaveris: nam cum conciliatrix amicitiae virtutis opinio fuerit, difficile est amicitiam manere, si a virtute defeceris. Cicero.

this just idea, we ought to be as resolute in animadverting upon faults, as in refusing what is wrong. This is one of the most useful, though at the same time one of the most delicate and difficult offices of Friendship: and, “if possible, should be so contrived, that our friend may perceive our advice and reproof is given him, not so much to please ourselves, as for his own advantage. The reproofs therefore of a friend should always be strictly just, and not too frequent *.”

Thus happy in the Choice of a friend, and in the proper behaviour towards him, cleave to him with the utmost fidelity; tried and approved, as he is, let nothing move you to change or forsake him, or to violate the sacred, the indissoluble engagement: “grapple him, as it were, to your soul with hooks of steel:” for if we ought not, in

* *Omni igitur in hac re habenda ratio & diligentia est, primum ut monitio, acerbitate; deinde ut objurgatio contumeliâ careat, &c. Cicero,*

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prudence, to break * even with a faulty friend, that we may not expose the weakness of our choice ; how much less with a worthy and amiable one, that we may not be upbraided with having lost so valuable a treasure ! “ For sake not, therefore, an old friend, for the new is not comparable to him : a new friend is as new wine, when it is old thou shalt drink it with pleasure.” “ Love thy friend, and be faithful unto him : but if thou bewrayest his secrets, follow no more after him †.”

Thus mutually faithful and constant, what a fountain of perpetual pleasures will you open to yourselves, my young friends ; a fountain, ever full and ever flowing with the most cordial and refreshing delights ! especially if your Friendship, grounded on

* Cicero advises well, that if we are unhappily obliged at any time to *break* with our friends, “ Tales amicitiae sunt remissione usus eluendae, & *diffuendae* magis quam *discendae*, &c.”

† See Eccclus. ix. 10. and xxvii. 17. Similar to this, Cicero says, *Veterrima quoque (ut ea vina quae vetustatem ferunt) esse debent suavissima, &c.*

Christian Virtue and real Religion, looks as it ought, beyond the grave, and triumphs in the assured, the glorious hope of an eternal union ! Then what "Views" will cheer and animate you ! what "Conversation," high and excellent, will engage and warm you ! true Conversation, in all its most useful, its most pleasing refinement * ! Then what "zeal" for each other's spiritual welfare, and advancement in every high and honourable

* Mr. Addison has a pleasing remark on Conversation, which will serve to elucidate my meaning here, as also some passages in the sermon on Conversation : "One would think, says he, that the larger the company is in which we are engaged, the greater variety of thoughts and subjects would be started in discourse : but instead of this we find, that Conversation is never so much straitened and confined as in numerous assemblies. When a multitude meet together upon any subject of discourse, their debates are taken up chiefly with forms, and general positions ; nay, if we come into a more contracted assembly of men and women, the talk generally runs upon the weather, fashions, news, and the like public topics. In proportion as Conversation gets into clubs and knots of friends, it descends into particulars, and grows more free and communicative : But the most open, instructive, and unreserved discourse, is that which passes between "two persons, who are familiar and intimate friends." On these occasions a man gives a loose to

perfection will glow in your bosoms; and how will you mutually delight, as to promote each other's "good," so to promote the good of all your fellow-creatures; exhorting and stimulating each his friend to the constant, the chearing exertion of universal benevolence and love! The divine grace operating on your minds, amidst this amiable discharge of duty,—this friendly contention, as it were, to excel in goodness,—will daily improve those minds; will daily more and more advance and confirm those tempers and dispositions, which are so necessary to the being and the continuance of Friendship: will daily make you more and more mild, gentle, faithful, conscientious, and disinterested; in short, will make you to grow more and more daily in that *Christian love*, that universal good-will, that god-like principle, which is of all others the best ground-work of Friend-

every passion and every thought that is uppermost, discovers his most retired opinions of persons and things, tries the beauty and strength of his sentiments, and exposes his whole soul to the examination of his friend." *Spectator*, No. 68.

ship; the most solid foundation of an alliance, beyond the reach of time to destroy!

See then, in this particular, how admirably the Christian Religion is calculated to carry to its most exalted height this sacred union of minds, which all the world has agreed to venerate; and what a peculiar provision it makes for the severest shock this union can receive, when all-commanding Nature enjoins its dissolution! The friend, the Christian friend, laments not his beloved companion, dear to him as his own soul—he laments him not as lost; he grieves not as one without hope. But far beyond the regions of the grave, the limits of time, he looks to that kingdom and that period, when he shall be united in immortal, in everlasting bonds of amity, and enjoy in all its perfection that Friendship, whose delights have so cheered and blessed him in his pilgrimage through this world.

Great and generous souls, even in the dark uncertain state of Heathenism, were not

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willing to forego the pleasing, though doubtful idea of this blessed re-union*. Something intimated to their hearts the prospect and probability of it; and that probability awakened at once in them the noblest sentiments and the sweetest comforts! How much rather then, my young friends, should the certainty, the transporting certainty of a future life and immortality, brought to light through our great Redeemer, cheer, animate, and inspire you! How much rather should it influence you to fidelity and affection in your Friendships, to reflect, that you may enjoy here all the blessings which that noble passion communicates, under the full, the blissful persuasion, that you never shall be deprived of those benefits; But when death shall dismiss you from your labours and trials below, eternal Friendship and love shall meet and crown you with transport, in the kingdom of Truth, of Peace, and of Glory; *which, &c.*

* See the close of Cicero's treatises de Senectute, & de Amicitia.

ANECDOTES respecting FRIENDSHIP.

(1.) Athenodorus the philosopher, by reason of his great age, begged leave to retire from the court of Augustus ; which the emperor accordingly granted him. In making his compliments on the occasion, as he was about to withdraw, "Remember, Cæsar, said he, whenever you are angry, that you say or do nothing, before you have distinctly repeated to yourself the four and twenty letters of the alphabet." Upon this Cæsar, catching him hastily by the hand, cried out ; "Stay, stay, Athenodorus ! I have need of thy presence longer still ;" and so detained him another year. This incident is celebrated by the ancients as a rule of excellent wisdom, and does high honour to this intrepid and honest counsellor to the world's master.

(2.) At the siege of Bridgenorth Castle, in the Reign of Henry II. which was defended by Roger de Mortimer, the king exposed himself to so much danger, that he would have been slain, if a faithful vassal had not

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preferred his sovereign's life to his own. For, while he was busied in giving orders too near the wall, Hubert de St. Clare, constable or governor of Colchester castle, who stood by his side, seeing an arrow aimed at Henry by one of Mortimer's archers, stepped before him, and received it in his own breast. The wound was mortal: he expired in the arms of his master, recommending his daughter (an only child, and an infant) to the care of that prince. It is hard to say which most deserves admiration; a Subject who died to save his king, or a King, whose personal virtues could render his safety so dear to a subject, whom he had not obliged by any extraordinary favours. The daughter of Hubert was educated by Henry with all the affection that he owed to the memory of her father; and, when she had attained to maturity, was honourably married to William de Longueville, a nobleman of great distinction, on condition of his taking the name of St. Clare, which the grateful Henry was desirous to perpetuate.

(3.) Monsieur Sedaine, in his "Discourse upon the Qualifications which constitute the Beauty of the Soul," informs us, That a certain gentleman of rank lost a friend, who at his death left debts unpaid, and two children very young. The surviving friend was immediately observed to retrench his household, his equipage, and take lodgings in a small house; from whence he walked every day to the palace, followed by one footman, and performed the duties of his post. He is instantly suspected of avarice, and of bad conduct, and undergoes a variety of calumnies. In short, at the end of two years, he re-appears in the world; having accumulated a sum of 20,000 livres, which he applied to the service of his deceased friend's children, and thus rescued a worthy memory from shame, and a helpless offspring from misery and ruin. It is pity the author had not informed us of the Name of a man, whose conduct is so honourable to Friendship and humanity.

(4.) This heroic action recalls to mind another somewhat like it, which is recorded in history. Eudamidas of Corinth, a very poor man, drawing near his end, his mother and daughter were thereby threatened with indigence and distress : He however was no way alarmed at the news ; but, judging of the hearts of Aretæus and Charixenes, his wealthy and faithful friends, by his own, just in the article of death, he made this memorable will. “ I bequeath to Aretæus, the maintenance of my mother, and her support under old age ; and to Charixenes, I bequeath and appoint the disposal of my daughter in marriage, and giving her the best dower in his power to bestow : and in case, either of my said two friends should happen to die ; then I substitute the survivor to perform that which the other should have done, had he lived.” This testament being read, they who knew the poverty of Eudamidas, but not his connection with the legatees, looked upon the whole matter as a piece of pleasantry, and went out laughing at the legacies assigned them. But the latter, as soon as ever they

heard of it, immediately came, acknowledged, and solemnly ratified what was enjoined them in the will. Charixenes, however, we are informed, died within a few days after; upon which Aretæus, his excellent successor, took upon him the two-fold charge; kept the mother of Eudamidas with a tender and filial care, and in due time married off the daughter of the deceased the same day with his own daughter, and gave her an equal portion of his effects. The celebrated Nicholas Poussin's pencil has immortalized this great action; painting Eudamidas at the moment when life seems expiring, and he is dictating this memorable last will.

(5.) There is something in Friendship so very great and noble, that in those fictitious stories which are invented to the honour of any particular person, the authors have thought it as necessary to make their hero a Friend, as a Lover. Achilles has his Patroclus, and Æneas his Achates. In the first of these instances we may observe (for the reputation of the subject in question) that Greece was

almost ruined by the hero's love, but was preserved by his Friendship. The character of Achates suggests to us an observation, which we may often make, on the intimacies of great men; who frequently choose their companions rather for the qualities of the heart than those of the head; and prefer fidelity in an easy, inoffensive, complying temper, to those endowments which make a much greater figure among mankind. I don't remember that Achates, who is represented as the first favourite, either gives his advice, or strikes a blow, through the whole *Æneid*. A friendship which makes the least noise, is very often the most useful; for which reason I should prefer a prudent friend to a zealous one. *Spectator*, No. 385.

(6.) Seneca, taking notice of Augustus Cæsar's lamenting upon a certain occasion, the death of Mecænas and Agrippa, observes, "That he who could instantly repair the destruction of whole fleets and armies, and bid Rome, after a general conflagration, rise out of her ashes even with more lustre than before;

was yet unable, during a whole life, to fill up those lasting vacancies in his Friendship." A reflection, than which nothing can more beautifully illustrate the excellence of this noble passion.

(7.) If men would place their first ambition upon the virtue of their actions, and attempt things only because it is their duty to attempt them, grace of action would naturally attend the integrity of their hearts, and a becoming deportment crown their honest designs. A young man of quality, we are told, by a sudden accident became an accomplished orator in one day. The occasion was this. A gentleman who had chastised a ruffian for an insolence towards a kinswoman of his, was stigmatised with very outrageous language in a certain company, where the young nobleman happened to be present. When his friend's name was thus maltreated from man to man, the ingenuous youth discovered the utmost pain to those who sat near him; and having more than once said, "I am sure I could fight for

him: why then can't I speak for him?" at last he stood up. The eyes of the whole company were upon him; and though in his confusion he appeared utterly to have forgot what he rose to speak, the generous motive with which they all knew him to be actuated procured him such an acclamation of voices to hear him, that he expressed himself with a magnanimity and clearness, proceeding from the integrity of his heart, which made his very adversaries receive him as a man whom they wished their friend. The best way to do a thing as you ought, is to do it only because you ought.

(8.) It is related, as one of the chief excellencies of Mr. Bonnel, late Accomptant General in Ireland, That he was a most sincere, faithful, and zealous friend, and had all those qualities which could render his Friendship desirable; firmness and resolution, candour and openness, prudence, generosity, and love. He declined no trouble, no hazards to serve his Friends; he assisted, he advised them in all their doubts and difficulties, and constantly prayed for them. And he had

one property of a true friend, very rarely to be met with, because true Friendship is so;—which was, always to deal plainly with his friends, and tell them what he disliked in their conduct: but this he did not in a haughty imperious way, but with the prudent endearments and tenderness, as well as sincerity of a good man;—in such a manner, as by his reproofs to oblige them, and to fix them faster to his Friendship. See his Life, p. 231.

(9.) The very ingenious and amiable Bishop Berkely, of Cloyne in Ireland, was so intirely contented with his income in that diocese, that when offered by the Earl of Chesterfield (then Lord Lieutenant) a bishoprick much more beneficial than that he possessed, he declined it with these words; “I love my neighbours, and they love me. Why then should I begin, in my old days, to form new connections, and tear myself from those friends, whose kindness is to me the greatest happiness I enjoy.”—Acting in this instance like the celebrated Plutarch, who, being asked, why he resided in his

native city, so obscure and so little? "I stay, said he, lest it should grow less."

(10.) At the battle of Roucoux in 1746, a serjeant of the regiment of Flanders, named Vidal, giving his arm to the prince of Monaco (who was wounded) in order to lead him to a place of safety, had that very arm broken to pieces by a musket ball. Without betraying the least emotion, this dauntless heroe only changed his arm, saying; "Take this, my prince; the other is now good for nothing."

(11.) Psammenitus, king of Egypt, was taken prisoner by Cambyfes, and carried out of his own kingdom into Persia. The victor more keenly to insult and afflict their wretched parents, ordered the young princess, Psammenitus's daughter, and all the other young ladies of quality, whom he had brought captive, to go dressed in the habit of slaves, carrying water upon their backs. While the rest of the Egyptians were quite distracted at this spectacle, Psammenitus remained very calm, with his eyes fixed upon the ground.

Soon after, Cambyfes ordered his fon, the young Egyptian prince, with feveral of the young noblemen his companions, to be led forth tied together by the necks, and bridled like horfes, with bits in their mouths. Pfammenitus, upon this additional fhock, was the only perfon who refrained from tears : But, happening to efpy a certain familiar Friend of his go about begging, in a naked, ftarving condition ; upon calling to his friend, he burft into a flood of tears, beating his head after the manner of the barbarians. Cambyfes hearing the fingularity of his behaviour, demanded to know the reafon why he remained filent and unmoved upon viewing the calamity of his children, and was all on a fudden fo much afflicted at feeing the diftreffes of a poor old man. “ O fon of Cyrus, answered Pfammenitus, domeftick miferies, arrived to this violent height, are more grievous than to admit of tears. But to fee my Friend, reduced from a ftate of eafe and affluence to this extremity of diftreff and want, in the very verge of life, This is an object that commands my tears.”

(12.) Monsieur du Chatelet, a privy-counsellor to Louis XIII. very earnestly soliciting the pardon of M. de Montmorency; the king said to him, "I verily think you would have lost your arm for Montmorency."—"Sire," said he to his sovereign, "I would willingly have lost both, as being useless in your Majesty's service; so I might but be able to save one, who has gained so many battles for you. It is not interest, Sire, it is Friendship, which implores your mercy."—Can it be wondered that such pleading should obtain all it asked?

(13.) While M. de Bouteville was under prosecution, the same M. du Chatelet drew up a case in his defence. Cardinal Richelieu, enraged at the use which Chatelet had made of his eloquence, reproached him with having employed it to condemn the Justice of the king. "O pardon me," said M. du Chatelet, "I have wished to justify the king's Mercy, if he has the kindness to extend it, towards one of the most valiant men of his kingdom."

(14.) "There is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother, and a faithful friend is known in adversity:" the following is a pleasing instance. When Dean Swift was at Sir Arthur Achefon's, at Market-hill, in the county of Armagh, an old gentleman was recommended to him, as having been a remarkable cavalier in the reigns of Charles II. James II. and William III. who had behaved with great loyalty and bravery in Scotland, during the troubles of those reigns, but was neglected by the government, although he deserved great rewards from it. As he was reduced in his circumstances, the Dean made him a handsome present; but said, at the same time, "This trifle, Sir, cannot support you long, and your friends may grow tired of you; therefore I would have you contrive some honest means of getting a sum of money, sufficient to put you into a way of life for supporting yourself with independency in your old age." To this Captain Creighton (for that was the gentleman's name) answered, "I have tired all my friends, and cannot expect any such

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extraordinary favours."—"Sir, replied the Dean, I have heard much of your adventures; that they are fresh in your memory; that you can tell them with great humour; and that you have taken memorandums of them in writing." The Captain answered, I have; but no one can understand them but myself. "Well, then, Sir, rejoined the Dean, get your manuscripts, read them to me, and tell me none but genuine stories; and then I will place them in order of time for you, prepare them for the press, and endeavour to get you a subscription among my friends, as you may do among your own." The Captain soon after waited on the Dean with his papers, and related to him many adventures, which the Dean was so kind as to put in chronological order, to correct the style, and make a small book of them, intitled, "The Memoirs of Captain John Creighton." A subscription was immediately set on foot, by the Dean's interest and recommendation, which raised for the Captain above 200*l.* and made the remaining part of his life very happy and easy. These

“Memoirs of Captain Creighton,” are inserted in the 13th volume of the Dean’s works, and stand an immortal monument of polite and disinterested Friendship.

(15.) The “Stage” (says Mr. Addison, speaking of the employment of time) might be made a perpetual source of the most noble and useful entertainments, were it under proper regulations. But, the mind never unbends itself so agreeably, as in the Conversation of a well chosen “Friend.” There is indeed no blessing of life, that is any way comparable to the enjoyment of a discreet and virtuous friend. It eases and unloads the mind; clears and improves the understanding, engenders thoughts and knowledge, animates virtue and good resolution, soothes and allays the passions, and finds employment for most of the vacant hours of life. Next to such an intimacy with a particular person, one would endeavour after a more general Conversation, with such as are able to entertain and improve those with whom they converse; which are qualifications that seldom

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go asunder." See Spectator, No. 93, also Numbers 385, 399 ; and the Christian's Magazine, vol. iv. p. 481.

(16.) Two persons being upon their journey to *Delphos*, were set upon by thieves; and while one of them was no farther solicitous than how to make his escape, the other was killed. The survivor continued his travels; But when he came to the Oracle, the God rejected his address, expelled him the temple, and reproached his cowardice and base desertion of his friend, in the following manner.

Do not, presumptuous wretch! these rites
profane,

Nor with polluted gifts our altars stain;

Nor prudent fears, and threatening fate
pretend;

False to thy God, thy honour, and thy friend!

These claim thy blood in any danger near,

And must condemn that base and guilty fear,

Which of a Coward made a treacherous

Murderer.

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Henceforth dare to be just and brave; for
 know,
 He that declines to ward it, gives the blow.

(17.) Friendship is well defined, “ A strong and habitual inclination in two persons to promote the good and happiness of each other ;” and Aristotle affirms of real Friendship, that it is a soul which inhabits two bodies. Spencer speaks of each kind of life with great justice, but attributes the highest praise to Friendship. And indeed there is no disputing the point, but by making that Friendship take place between two married persons ; in which most happy case, ’tis a something transcendantly delightful ; which is not absolutely one or the other ; but is more than both, and cannot be expressed. The poet’s words are these :

Hard is the doubt and difficult to deem,
 When all three kinds of love together meet,
 And do dispart the heart with power extreme,
 Whether shall weigh the ballance down ;
 To wit,

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The dear affection unto Kindred sweet,
Or raging fire of love to Woman kind,
Or zeal of Friends, combin'd by Virtues
meet:

But, of them all, the band of virtuous mind,
Methinks the gentle heart should most assured
bind.

For natural affection soon doth cease,
And quenched is with Cupid's greater flame;
But faithful FRIENDSHIP doth them both
suppress,

And them with mastering discipline doth
tame,

Through thoughts aspiring to eternal fame.
For, as the soul doth rule this earthly mass,
And all the service of the Body frame;
So love of Soul doth love of Body pass,
No less than perfect gold surmounts the
meanest brass."

(18.) Never perhaps was there a more
sincere and elegant Friendship, than that
which subsisted between Scipio and Lælius.
The former was one of the greatest generals
and best men that Rome ever produced;

the other, for his probity and prudence was distinguished by the surname of "the Wise." They were almost of the same age, and had the same inclination, benevolence of mind, taste for learning of all kinds, principles of government and zeal for the public good. If Scipio took place in the point of military glory, his friend had perhaps the superiority in respect of eloquence. But let us hear Lælius himself upon so interesting a subject: "As for me, of all the gifts of nature or fortune, there are none, I think, comparable to the happiness of having Scipio for my friend. I found in our Friendship a perfect conformity of sentiments, in respect to publick affairs; an inexhaustible fund of counsels and supports in private life; with a tranquillity and delight not to be expressed. I never gave Scipio the least offence to my knowledge, nor ever heard a word escape him, that did not please. We had but one house, and one table at our common expence, the frugality of which was equally the taste of both: For in war, in travelling, in the country, we were always together. I do not men-

tion our studies, and the attention of us both always to learn something. This was the employment of all our leisure hours, removed from the sight and commerce of the world."

Is there now any thing comparable to a Friendship like that here described? "What a consolation is it (says Tully) to have a second-self, to whom we have nothing secret, and into whose heart we may pour out our own with perfect unreserve? Could we taste prosperity so sensibly, if we had no one to share with us in our joy? And what a relief is it in adversity, to have a friend still more affected with it than ourselves?"—But what more highly exalts the value of the Friendship in question, was, its not being founded at all in interest, but solely in esteem for each others virtues. "What occasion, says Lælius, could Scipio have for me? Undoubtedly none; nor I for him." But my attachment to him was the effect of my high esteem and admiration of his virtues; and his to me arose from the favourable idea he entertained of my character and manners. This Friendship increased afterwards on both sides, by

habit and commerce. We both, indeed, derived great advantages from it, but these were not our views when we began to love each other.”—Nothing upon earth can be so desirable as such an amity. But in vain do we seek it among the ignorant, the vain, the selfish, or men of loose and profligate principles. We must soon be ashamed of loving the man whom we cannot esteem. ’Tis David and Jonathan, ’tis Damon and Pythias, Tully and Atticus, Scipio and Lælius, and such only who can truly taste and dignify pure Friendship; and such only can say with Ovid, “*Nos duo Turba sumus* :” We two are a Multitude. See Cicero de Amicitia, and Stretch’s Beauties of History, p. 259.

+ (19.) His late Royal Highness Frederick Prince of Wales,—who amongst his other great qualities, was the patron of merit, and the friend of mankind,—was frequently visited by persons of distinguished abilities, with whom he contracted a strict intimacy. Among these, Mr. G——, (who is as justly

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celebrated for the amiableness of his character, as for the qualifications of an orator and a poet) had a considerable share in his esteem. One day the Prince observed at his levée that he had not seen this gentleman for some time, and asking if he was well, was told that Mr. Gl—— was under difficulties on account of some losses in trade, which had so discouraged him, that he was ashamed to appear in his Highness's presence. The Prince replied, "I am sorry for it;" and presenting a bank note of 500 l. to a gentleman who stood by, added, "Carry this to Mr. Gl—— as a small testimony of my affection, and assure him from me, that I sympathize in his affliction, and shall be always glad to see him."

(20.) In the time of the proscription by the triumvirate at Rome, a grievous punishment was denounced against any person who should conceal or any way assist the proscribed; as, on the other hand, great rewards were promised to those who should discover their hiding places. Marcus Varro, the philosopher, was in the list of persons pro-

scribed; at which time, his dear friend Calenus tenderly received and concealed him several days in his house; and though Anthony came often thither to walk and converse, yet was Calenus never affrighted, nor changed his mind, though he daily saw other men punished or rewarded, according to the purport of the bloody edict.

(21.) Camerarius observes, That at Rome were to be seen these verses engraven on an urn.

D. D. S.

Urna brevis geminum, quamvis tenet ista
cadaver,

Attamen in cœlo spiritus unus adest:

Viximus unanimes, Luciusque & Flavius,
idem

Sensus, amor, studium, vita duobus erat.

That is,

Though both our ashes this small urn inclose,
Yet, as one soul, in Heaven we repose:
Lucius and Flavius living were one mind,
One will, one love, and to one course inclin'd.

(22.) That ancient philosopher whose precept it was, “ to converse with our Friends, as if they might one day become our Enemies,” has been justly censured by Scipio, as advancing a very ungenerous maxim; nor would he believe it could have been uttered by Bias, one of the seven sages, but rather by some groveling or ambitious sophist, engrossed solely by the things of interest and blind self-love. However, to remember that we must one day most certainly be divided from those friends we now so dearly love, is a reflection, methinks, that should enter with us into this and all our tender connections of every kind. Death, says Seneca, falls heavy upon him, who is too much known to others, and too little to himself; and Pontanus, a man celebrated among the early restorers of literature, thought the study of our own hearts of so much importance, that he has recommended it, like a sincere friend, even from his tomb. “ *Sum Johannes Jovianus Pontanus, quem amaverunt bonæ musæ, suspexerunt viri probi, honestaverunt reges domini: Jam scis qui sim, vel qui potius*

fuerim. Ego vero te, hospes, noscere in tenebris nequeo, sed teipsum ut noscas rogo."

"I am *Pontanus*, beloved by the powers of literature, admired by men of worth, and dignified by the monarchs of the world. Thou knowest now who I am, or, more properly, who I was. For thee, stranger, I who am in darkness cannot know thee, but I intreat thee to know thyself."—We hope every reader of these anecdotes will consider himself as engaged to the observation of a precept, which the wisdom and virtue of all ages have concurred to enforce; a precept dictated by philosophers, inculcated by sages, and ratified by saints. See *Rambler*, No. 28.

(23.) Eusebius and Pamphilus were Christian friends, whose love was so close and intense, that their historian says, as if in allusion to the language of the sacred writer, Deut. xiii. 6, that *they seemed to have but one soul between them*; and when the martyrdom of the latter had separated them from the presence of each other, and put a

stop to the former exchange of good offices between them; yet it did not put an end to their league of love and amity, but the survivor copied the pattern, assumed the name, and wrote the history of his former dear companion; and continued to enjoy his friend in a sense and method, which Heathen principles could not have taught or supported.

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P A R T I.

On the right and industrious Employment of
T I M E.

PROVERBS vi. 6, &c.

*Go to the Ant, thou sluggard, consider her ways,
and be wise : which, having no guide, over-
seer, or ruler, provideth her meat in the
summer, and gathereth her food in the
harvest.*

WONDER not, my young friends,
that I enumerate amongst those
PLEASURES which I would recommend to
you, as substantial and sincere, “the right
and industrious employment of Time.” You
perhaps, judging either from the report of
corrupt nature, or the false mirror of fashion-
able life, might rather suppose that Plea-
sure to be found in dissipation and indolence;
in the whirl of gaiety, and the round of
amusement. But let us listen awhile to the

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voice of reason and reflection, and no doubt we shall soon be convinced, that as no possession in the hands of mortals is more valuable and important than TIME, so no satisfaction is more grateful and real, than that which arises from a retrospect of Time, well and industriously employed.

The wise man in the text refers us to the Ant, not only as an example of "Industry," but of "the provident use of Time:" For she, with infinite and unwearied assiduity, *gathereth her little store*; and she gathereth it *in the summer, in the harvest*, improving wisely the season for her supply; and thus rejoiceth in the winter over the fruits of her well-timed application and pains.

It is a lesson, my young friends, worthy your most serious consideration; for from the meanest insect, from the lowest reptile you may gather instruction: *Ask now the beasts, and they will teach thee, says Job, and the fowls of the air, and they will inform thee* *.

* Job xii. 7.

Man, like the Ant, has his summer, his harvest, his season for laying up a store to rejoice and refresh his soul, at a time when all power of providing will be utterly precluded : and if haply he neglect or misemploy that season, wretched indeed will be his penury and his suffering ; a winter of indigence and woe !

What a motive, my young friends, to improve this important season, which is happily now in your power : You will find it no less your indispensable “ Duty,” than your highest “ Wisdom,” and truest “ Pleasure.”

That it is your “ indispensable duty,” you cannot doubt a moment, when you consider the end for which all “ Time” is given you. Certainly not to squander away in foolish, frivolous, or vicious pursuits, not to waste in doing nothing or in doing ill ; but to be employed in such a manner as becomes a probationer for eternity, on the stage of this short and precarious life. Contemplate yourself in this right view, and you will be

convinced, that as of all the talents delivered to man, by his great Lord and Master, Time is the most considerable ; so is he under the highest obligations to improve that precious deposit. Indeed, upon the due improvement of it depends the performance of all his duties ; and consequently, the misuse of Time will necessarily defeat all the great ends which HE benevolently proposed, who gave to man this Time, this important season to work out his salvation, and to secure immortality. One cannot therefore well conceive a greater offence against God, than a waste or misapplication of those moments, which he hath destined to the noblest uses, the best ends ; and which (infinitely to enhance the value) once lost are recoverable no more. Suffer your youth to glide away unimproved ! —suffer that Harvest of future life to pass uncultivated, ungathered ! alas, my friends, no power or might in mortality can recall the favourable season ! In the sad winter of desolate life, we can only lament our unthrifty neglect, or vile prodigality ! and the end of all will be, most probably, not

only the bitter remonstrances of upbraiding conscience here, but the still more bitter remonstrances of that conscience for ever; *that worm which never dieth!*

Inferior, it is true, but not less real are the obligations we are under to improve our Time, from the debt we owe to society, to our friends. We live not for ourselves, we cannot live for ourselves: united in society with our fellow-mortals, we owe them reciprocal returns for the advantages which we receive from their union and intercourse: and so far as we refuse or withhold these returns, we offend against the laws of society, and make ourselves unworthy of its benefits *. But how is it possible that they shall discharge their duty, and perform the necessary offices of their place and station, who indolently

* Unum debet esse omnibus propositum, (says Cicero, de Offic. lib. 3.) ut eadem sit utilitas uniuscujusque & universorum: quam si ad se quisque rapiat, dissolvetur omnis humana consortio.—Alteri vivas oportet, (says Seneca, Epist. 48.) si vis tibi vivere: hæc societas diligenter & sanctè observanda est, quæ nos omnes omnibus miscet & indicat aliquid esse commune jus generis humani.

waste or wickedly misemploy the moments, which ought to be occupied in the necessary and worthy functions of life? Cicero hath well observed that every hour hath its proper duty *. If we would improve our Time, and discharge the debt we owe to society, as well as to ourselves, we shall be careful to fulfil that duty; to employ ourselves in the exercise of every virtue and every office which our situation enjoins and requires.

And what "Wisdom" can be greater! Candidates for a blissful immortality, a short period is allotted us to prove ourselves worthy: a discharge of duty is the right improvement of that period; and that discharge not only secures the high felicity set before us, but in the mean time, peculiarly conduces to our present welfare and satisfaction. Who then that is wise would neglect to secure to himself such exquisite advantages? If in matters of a temporal concern we freely brand with

* Nullum tempus vacare officio potest.

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the mark of Folly those, who by neglect of proper opportunities, or through indolence and inattention forfeit advantages, which would render their worldly circumstances easy and comfortable; how much rather should we fix that stigma upon those, who, by a wretched abuse of the present short season of life, forfeit an eternity of consummate happiness? And can we conceive, that such an happiness is to be obtained without any attention or labour on our parts? that it will be lavished upon us, however we neglect or despise it? What example have we of a similar kind to encourage us in such an idea? What do we see or know of earthly things, desirable and great, which are thus obtained? St. Paul well observes, that “Every one who striveth for an earthly crown, for a corruptible reward, is temperate in all things;” in all things fulfilling the duties required, and improving every moment of the Time assigned for his preparation to the contest. How much rather then ought we, must we thus strenuously apply ourselves to the duties enjoined, and do all we can to husband well this “short.

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and precarious" season of trial, if we wish to appear truly wise, and to gain the prize of eternal blessedness !

For wisdom *urgeth* us no less strenuously to the same conduct, from the "shortness and precariousness" of this important period : which, were we certain of enjoying its utmost extent, is but a point compared to eternity : And yet of this point, we can never assure ourselves, so many thousand avenues are daily opened to the vast regions of immensity ! Who then would omit to improve the opportunity, by Almighty goodness put into his power, and to live to day as one that knows he may be summoned on the morrow to an immortal life !

Only consider, my young friends, what manner of persons we should each of us become, if we were informed by truth infallible, that within the space of "twenty days" we must give up Time, and enter on Eternity ! Could we do other than seriously, and with all our power, apply ourselves to the duties

which would recommend to the happiness of that eternity?—"Now as we are all created to be eternal, to live in an endless succession of ages upon ages, where thousands and millions of thousands of years, will have no proportion to our everlasting life with God; so with regard to this eternal state, which is our real state, "twenty days" is as poor a pittance as "twenty years." And who can presume to promise himself twenty years! How wise then to live, as thus comparing Time with Eternity! For since an eternal state is as certainly ours as our present state, it is plain that we cannot judge rightly of any particular Time as to us, but by comparing it with that eternal duration, for which we are created. If you would know what five years signify to a being which is to exist an hundred, you must compare five to an hundred, and see what proportion it bears: So if you would know what twenty years signify to a son of Adam, you must compare it, not to a million of ages, but to an eternal duration, to which no number of millions bears any proportion; and then you

will judge right by finding it *nothing*, a mere drop in the great ocean of eternity ! Upon the footing then of this state of the case, consider only how you would condemn the “ Folly ” of a man, who should lose his share of future glory, for the sake of being rich or great, or praised or delighted in any enjoyment, only one poor day before he was to die !—But if the period will come, when a number of years will seem less to every one of us, than a day does now ; what a condemnation must it then be, if eternal happiness shall appear to be lost, for something less than the enjoyment of a day !

“ Why does a Day seem a trifle to us now ? It is because we have Years to set against it. It is the duration of years which makes it appear as nothing. What a trifle then must the years of a man’s age appear, when we are obliged to set them against Eternity ? when there shall be nothing but Eternity wherewith to compare them ! This will be the alarming case of each one of us, as soon as we depart from this temporary scene. We

shall be forced to forget the distinctions of days and years, and to measure Time, not by the course of the sun, but by setting it against an endless duration ! As the fixed stars, on account of our being placed at such a distance from them, however large in themselves, appear but as so many points to us ; So when we, placed in eternity, shall look back upon all Time, it will appear but as a moment, a very point of existence * !” Alarming reflections ! Will they not be sufficient to convince us, my young friends, how poorly they think, how falsely they estimate, how unwisely they act, who are less careful of an eternal state, because they may be at some distance from it, than they would be, if they knew they were within a few weeks or days of it ? And yet who of us can assure himself, that he is even within so long a space as a few days of it ? In a few hours perhaps the dire arrest may come : On this moment depends eternity ! Wilt thou then, O man, be guilty of so glaring a folly, as to

* See Law’s Serious Call.

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abuse or neglect this moment, this season, this harvest of thy hopes? *Go to the Ant, thou insensible, consider her ways, and be WISE.*

It would be easy to shew the wisdom of a due improvement of Time, from a variety of other considerations; we might urge besides "its shortness and precariousness," the many unavoidable and necessary interruptions, to which a right improvement of it is subject; the large portion of it constantly devoted to the services of animal nature, to the preservation of our body in life and health: and we might urge from thence the obligations we are under to consult for our superior part, for our soul's health and vigour, to which surely we ought to dedicate all the Time we can improve, from the demands of animal and inferior nature. But I pass by these considerations: just briefly to recommend the wisdom of rightly improving your Time, from a motive more especially interesting to You, my young friends: The period of improvement is short; it is that only which You happily have in your power. For we cannot

chuse the Time of life wherein to avail ourselves of our natural endowments, and to reap all the advantages designed us in them. In youth, our bodies easily receive whatever mien or motion : where is the sound so difficult which our tongues cannot be then taught to express? But if we are advanced to manhood, before these qualifications are attained, how fruitless, or at least how difficult will be the endeavour to attain them? —Exactly similar is the case with our understanding, our will, and our passions. There is a season,—the important season now in your possession,—when a plenteous harvest of useful truths may be gathered ; when our passions will readily submit to the government of reason ; when right principles may be so fixed in us, as to influence every important action of our future lives *. But this season, this seed-time of our hopes, extends neither to the whole, nor to any considerable length of our continuance upon earth : It is limited to a few years of our term ; and if through-

* See vol. i. p. 12.

out these we neglect it, error and ignorance, vice and misery, according to the usual course of things, are entailed upon us: our will becomes our law; our lusts gain a strength which we shall afterwards vainly oppose; and wrong inclinations are so confirmed in us, that they defeat all our endeavours to correct them.

How wise then, my young friends, to seize this precious opportunity, and to lay up a store of future happiness and peace! For this will be found not only your "Duty" and your "Wisdom," but your highest "Happiness." It is with a view to that happiness, with a view to your "real Pleasure" more especially, that I wish to recommend the proper employment of your Time.—It is a self-evident maxim, that the better we are, the happier we must be: Angels are happier than we, because they are holier: God is perfect happiness because he is perfect goodness. Now the more diligently we discharge the duties of our station, the better we are: but this discharge of duty constitutes the right improvement of Time:

by plain consequence therefore the more carefully we improve our Time, the more we increase our happiness. Conscience bears a chearful testimony to the propriety of our conduct, and proclaims a jubilee to the self-approving mind : Serenity smooths our brow, and smiling satisfaction conducts us joyfully along the road of life. Every moment pleasingly occupied presents some useful prospect to our view : no painful lassitude, no irksome weariness, no tedious melancholy broods over the slow and heavy-dragging hours ; nor are we urged to frivolous dissipation, or to vicious engagements, to “ murder ” that Time, which hangs heavy on the hands of the poor being, whose utmost span below is three-score years and ten, but who after this short course is run, hath to live, an immortal spirit, from eternity to eternity * !

That Life, that eternal life, so formidable to the dissipated and vicious, affords a fresh

* There cannot surely be a greater inconsistency, than to lament the shortness of life, while we complain of the length, and tediousness of Time. “ Fulfil but your duties ; live for eternity ; and you will never find time irksome, or think life too short.”

source of most abundant happiness to the wise improver of the present transitory scene. Here he beholds the full, the ample rewards of all his present pains, and patient perseverance. High above the obstructing and opposing difficulties of a sinful world, he looks to that celestial region, where trial shall cease, though fruition never shall;—the fruition of God, and of the pleasures prepared for those who love him. Animated by this exalted hope, he is solicitous to redeem, to buy up, to improve every moment of this short and passing period; thinks nothing of real value in it, but what tends to the important design for which it is given him,—the glory of God, and the salvation of his soul. And in this view, he considers good or evil with an almost equal indifference; his heart, though truly thankful for the one, being never improperly attached to it; and for the other, he is able to say with full triumph, in the words of the sacred writer, *Our light afflictions, which are but for a moment, work out for us an eternal and exceeding weight of glory!*

Such is the “Happiness” both in present possession, and in future prospect, which a right improvement of your Time will certainly impart. Need I then, my young friends, exhort you to this duty? which is no less bound upon you by motives of your own Interest and Pleasure, both in this world and the next, than by motives of highest Obligation to the sovereign Giver of all your Time. I enter not into the particular methods by which you are to improve this precious talent. I enlarge not on the temporal advantages arising from such improvement; these will come more properly under the next discourse, when we speak of INDUSTRY: Suffer me however to offer two or three general rules, which may prove useful to direct your conduct.

“Take care then, First, that you employ your Time, and that you employ it innocently.” To be idle and unemployed, is a sign not only of a weak head, but of a bad heart. And as it is one vile abuse of Time, which is given us for action, and action of the utmost moment, so is it one sure method

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to lead us to other and worse abuses. For he who is idle and wholly unoccupied, will ere long without question be occupied in mischief. You must therefore take care, that you "Employ" your Time; but then you must take as much care to employ it "Innocently:" and by innocent employment is meant all the proper duties of your station, and all those inoffensive and short relaxations, which are necessary either to the health of your bodies, or to the enlivening and invigorating your minds.

We live in an age, when words are strangely perverted and abused, as well as things; and when the softest terms, as we have heretofore remarked *, are often given to actions, which deserve other appellations, and which, through those terms, lull and deceive the soul into destruction. Thus we call by the name of "innocent amusements" all those dissipating public and private pleasures, which reign so prevalent, which increase so

* See vol. ii. p. 43 and 141.

fast, and the love whereof may justly be termed the characteristic of our age. If we are created only for dissipation and pleasure, this infatuating circle of delights may be trod with security, and called innocent with propriety: If we are really candidates for an Eternal state, it will be difficult, I fear, to show the innocence of that love and attachment to diversions, which takes up the life, the time, the thoughts of those engaged in them; and which absolutely precludes from every right and honourable use of those talents which God hath committed to our trust. You, my young friends, desirous of improving your Time, will never term, can never think such dissipations innocent: But while you find some degree of relaxation necessary, and inoffensive and social amusements in a high degree useful, will be careful not to offend in the excess even of these: remembering that duty, not dissipation, is the great end of a Christian's existence; and that of all characters the most insignificant is that "of a lover of pleasure more than a lover of God."

But observe we secondly, That it is not enough that we "Employ" our Time, and employ it "Innocently:" We must be careful to "Improve" it as much as we can, and to redeem it from all that improper waste, and those unnecessary consumptions, in which men are apt to be too lavish of it. There are five things in which a terrible waste of time is too commonly made: In Sleep, in Meals, in Dress, (each absolutely necessary, yet each, alas! how much abused by us) in idle and impertinent Visits and useless Conversation when in company, and in vain and romantic thinking when alone. If a man were seriously to sit down,—even those amongst us, my beloved, who have not been addicted to any heinous vices—and to consider how the greatest part of his Time has stolen away, it would at once shock and surprize him! The portion would be found very small, which he could be said to have lived: and how much smaller still the portion employed in proper uses, and dedicated to His glory, who is the Lord of our life, and the giver of all our Time!

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Would you, therefore, my young friends, be able to give a better account to your Almighty master, you must husband with strictest œconomy the moments now happily in your power, and cut off as much as you may from those unreasonable and extravagant expences of Time. Nature is certainly contented with a moderate portion of Sleep; and as it is the lowest of all animal enjoyments, the dignity of that nature should arouse you on the one hand, to a conquest over it; as, on the other, should the unspeakable advantages which you will derive from early application in the morning to duty and to business. Health will be as well or better preserved, if we do not sit long and luxuriously at our Meals: A very little Time will serve to apparel us with decency and propriety: and we may divert ourselves, enjoy our friends, and perform all the necessary civilities which our situation in life requires, without making it an employment. And for those whose occupations call them to labour, they may well cut off all needless expences and waste of Time, by industry and application in their

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several professions. Then a chearful moment of honest relaxation, and a much more chearful moment of sincere Devotion, will cause all their Time to pass off light and easy.

But thirdly, My young friends, you must be careful not only to employ your Time, and to employ it innocently; not only to cut off and retrench all superfluous waste of it; But “all that Time, which you gain by retrenching, you must study to improve, by employing it to the best and noblest purposes *.”

* Mr. Addison, speaking of the Time spent in religious exercises, says, “The man who lives under an habitual sense of the divine presence, keeps up an habitual chearfulness of temper, and enjoys every moment the satisfaction of thinking himself in company with his dearest and best of friends. The Time never lies heavy upon him; it is impossible for him to be alone. His thoughts and passions are the most busied at such hours, when those of other men are most unactive. He no sooner steps out of the world, but his heart burns with devotion, swells with hope, and triumphs in the consciousness of that presence which every where surrounds him; or on the contrary, pours out its fears, its sorrows, its apprehensions to the great supporter of its existence.” Spectator, No. 93.

This is the principal point you are to aim at, if you would effectually improve your Time; you must be anxious to employ it in the best and noblest uses, in subserviency to your own eternal welfare; that is, with a constant eye to the glory of God, and the good of mankind: for herein consists our duty, and for this end was all our Time given us*. And let me recommend that in the management of this great deposit, in the practice of these rules, and in your right employment of your Time, you be careful to proportion that Time wisely, and according to the weight and importance of the work or business in which you engage: allotting such a part of it for this business, and such a part for that, so as not only to leave no intervals for unlawful or unnecessary acti-

* Bishop Beveridge's resolution (and let it be observed, those resolutions were formed, when he was about twenty years of age) respecting Time, is as follows: "I am resolved by God's grace, to redeem my Time past, in using a double diligence for the future:—to employ and improve all my gifts and endowments, both of body and mind, to the glory and service of my great Creator." See his *Private Thoughts*.

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ons to intrude themselves, but to have every hour assigned to its due employment. How great advantages, how great comforts arise from such a regular and exact distribution of Time, I could speak, my young friends, from my own experience, with the fullest assurance and satisfaction.

Thus then, if you would act agreeably to Duty, to Wisdom, to Happiness, you must husband the present season; you must improve the present short and precarious period allotted for your future and eternal provision. You have that season now: but you have only the present Now. Mortals exist for the present; the past is gone and dead; 'tis "with the years beyond the flood:" the future is not come, is uncertain; it may never come. The present only, but the present always is in our power. Yet, strange contradiction!—mortals rarely, if ever, live for the present: All human life is spent either in retrospection on the past, or in concern and preparation for the future *. This is the height of folly.

* See M. Pascal's Thoughts on Religion.

On the contrary it is true wisdom, and leads to true happiness, to live for the present, that is, to improve the Time we have in hand, for that is ours; to employ it to the best uses, and to work out our salvation *To day, while it is called to day, lest the night come wherein no man can work.*

Be this then your care, my dear young friends, who yet, through the mercy of God, are in the bloom and flower of life, and have the strength and perfection of your Time before you. This, this is the important season, wherein to perform acceptable duty. Provide then for yourselves an inexhaustible store of comfort; offer to God the services of your youth: so shall you enjoy in the winter of age the felicities of a peaceful mind, and an approving God; real, substantial, all-sufficient “Pleasures.” Nay, and if found ripe for glory, before you are ripe in years,—for God measures not life by length of days, but by the fulness of those days in virtuous and holy deeds—if early found ripe for glory, and cut down in the

blossom of your age; thus prepared your change shall be blessed; eternity and gladness shall crown and reward you. And, fully to convince yourselves of the vanity and misery of Time spent in worldly pleasures and pursuits, in doing evil, or in doing nothing, Only, in conclusion take with Me, a brief view of some of your fellow-creatures thus occupied around you!

See that sordid son of Avarice, who “ rises up early, late takes rest, and eats the bread of carefulness!” he it must be owned is diligent enough in husbanding his Time. But for what end is all this diligence, all this sollicitude!—It is to gain an increase to his earthly stores; it is to add something more to an heap, already too large for his enjoyment, and which will sink his soul deep into endless perdition. But this so much engrosses all his Time, his thoughts, his heart, that God, and Heaven, and his immortal soul can be spared none of either, or at best, but little; and that (as he spares to every thing)

very grudgingly : all is lost, this groveling earth-worm thinks,—all which is not given to gain !

See again, yon eager son of Pleasure : he is fearful lest the moments should escape : he has much to do ; “ Time is precious, he will tell you ; he must haste away, he cannot be detained at all ; he could not stay to perform any benevolent office, any religious duty, not if it were to save his soul.” And why all this anxiety, all this haste ?—an appointment of pleasure ; a meeting of gaiety or luxury ; wine or women solicit his attendance ; and thus miserably he employs all that Time, which was given him for the great purpose of securing his soul’s salvation.

Equally solicitous, though devoted to another service, this man’s whole Time and thought are engrossed by the Ambitious pursuit of worldly pomp and splendor. Here he conceives all happiness to centre : and

continually searching for that happiness, while continually disappointed in the search, you will not wonder, that he can spare no leisure, as he can find no satisfaction in a serious application to the important business, for which alone he was created !

Turn we our view from those thus busily occupied in wrong pursuits, to those who have no pursuits at all ; from those who misemploy their Time in doing evil, to those who equally misemploy it in doing nothing * ! What listless wretched beings ! In what a doze of

* The nature of these discourses precludes a too particular enumeration of characters : however, just to specify, what I cannot enlarge upon, I subjoin a passage from Dean Bolton's " Employment of Time," which may lead to a clearer idea of my meaning. He supposes that, in a vision, a Gymnosophist † examines the men in our country how they had pass'd their morning ; " Many of them acknowledged, that the morning, properly speaking, had been near gone before their eyes were opened : Many of them had only risen to dress, to visit, to amuse themselves at the drawing-room or coffee-house. Some had by riding or walking been consulting that health at the beginning of the day, which the close of it would wholly pass in impairing. Some, from the

† See Anecdotes, p. 211.

indolent stupidity pass their yawning useless days! mere burthens as they are to their

Time they had got on their own cloaths, had been engaged in seeing others put on theirs; in attending levees, in endeavouring to procure by their importunity, what they had disqualified themselves for, by their idleness. Some had been early out of their beds, but it was because they could not, from their ill luck the preceding evening, rest in them; and when risen, as they had no spirits, they could not reconcile themselves to any sort of application. Some had not had it in their power to do what was of much consequence: in the former part of the morning, they wanted to speak with their tradesmen, and in the latter, they could not be deny'd to their friends. Others, truly, had been reading; but reading what could neither make them wiser or better; what was not worth their remembering, or what they should wish to forget. Several appeared with an air, expressing the fullest confidence, that what they had to say for themselves, would be to the Philosopher's entire satisfaction. They have been employed, as virtuosi should be;—had been exercising their skill in the liberal arts, and encouraging the artists. Medals, pictures, statues, had undergone their examination, and been their purchase. They had been enquiring what the literati of France, Germany, Italy, had of late published; and they had bought what suited their respective tastes. When it appeared, That the compleating a Roman series, had been his concern, who had never read over in his own language a Latin historian, That they who grudged no expence for originals, knew them

mother earth; living merely to consume her fruits, to eat, to drink, to sleep, to trifle! Some of them you may observe vapourish and uneasy, dissatisfied and melancholy; complaining, that they know not "how to kill the tedious hours of this short life:" and applying for whole days, with an industry, which well-directed would almost canonize them for saints,—to the paltriest diversions, the meanest and the most irrational! such as are attended with the worst consequences in many cases, and lead to bad consequences in all. And this, all this merely "because they know not how to dispose of their Time;" that is, because they do not know, that every moment they live, they are to live for eternity!

only by hearsay from their worst copies: That the book-buyers had not laid out their money on what they ever proposed to read, but on what they had heard commended; and what they wanted to fit a shelf, and fill a library, which only served them for a breakfast room.—The sage pronounced this class of men, the idlest of all idle people; and doubly blameable, as wasting alike their Time and their fortune." See p. 59, &c.

Look only at examples like these, and the misery, the folly, the impropriety of abusing your Time, will appear in the most glaring light; and will lead you, my young friends, I trust, to a better application of the season before you. A true concern for religion will soon teach and direct you to such an employment of yourselves, as will render Time by no means burdensome: You will never complain of its length; its shortness only will strike and alarm you: and the proper use of Time will of itself tend more and more to convince you, that man was not born merely to fill up a little space on this transitory earth; to indulge his bodily passions, to live and to die, like the beasts which perish.—No; he was born to co-operate in the great work of his salvation with that Redeemer, who died on the cross to procure the means of grace, and to set the hope of glory before the sinful sons of men. That glory eternal depends upon the right improvement of the present Time. If we wish to enjoy that glory, we must use this Time as becomes rational and short-

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lived beings. If we disregard that glory, we may then live in the disregard of all things beside. You, I persuade myself, have better sentiments, for you have better hopes. God of his grace inspire you with true wisdom, and enable you to improve the present Time, that you may enjoy all the blessings and the glories of that which is to come!

ANECDOTES to enforce the employment of
T I M E.

(1.) "We all of us complain of the shortness of Time," says Seneca, "and yet have much more than we know what to do with. Our lives are either spent in doing nothing at all, or in doing nothing to the purpose, or in doing nothing that we ought to do. We are always complaining that our days are few; and acting as though there would be no end of them." In short, that noble philosopher has described our inconsistency with ourselves in this particular, by all those various turns of expression and thought, which are peculiar to his writings.

(2.) The allusion of human life to trees, leaves, &c. is familiar with the most celebrated poets. Homer's famous speech of Glaucus, *Iliad*, b. vi. ver. 181. is too generally known to need a recital; and the same thought may be found in *Ecclesiasticus*, c. xiv. ver. 18. almost word for word. That fine fragment however of Simonides,

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extant in Stobæus, is so very strikingly adapted to the present subject, that we cannot withhold it from the reader; and contains such beautiful instruction, as we would wish to leave upon his mind.

“ Wise was the Chian, when he said, to
shew

The instability of men below;

“ Ah! what a wondrous likeness may we trace
Between the falling trees, and mortal race!”

Yet, yet, how few the solemn truth receive!

Vain in pursuit, and high in hope they live:

A thousand fruitless schemes their thoughts
engage,

Alike forgetful or of death or age:

Toiling, while health and strength their
powers supply,

With busy, restless, fond anxiety!

Ah fools and vain! and will they not be wise,

Nor know that youth's fair flow'r soon fades

and dies,

And life's quick moment like a shuttle flies!

But thou, my friend, a better lesson learn,

And, hence instructed, mind thy great

concern:

To virtue's generous acts thy soul apply,
In good more active,—as so soon to die!"

(3.) It was a memorable practice of Vespasian the Roman emperor, throughout the course of his whole life. He called himself to an account every night for the actions of the past day; and as often as he found he had slipped any one day without doing some good, he entered upon his diary this memorandum, "Diem perdidit;" "I have lost a day." The above fine instance is thus noticed by our great moral poet, in the Night Thoughts.

"On all-important Time, through every
age,
Though much, and warm, the wise have
urg'd, The man
Is yet unborn who duly weighs an hour.
"I've lost a day"—the prince who nobly
cry'd,
Had been an emperor without his crown;
Of Rome!—Say rather, lord of human race,
He spoke, as if deputed by mankind.
So should all speak: So reason speaks in all.—

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Where is that thrift, that avarice of TIME,
(O glorious avarice!) Thought of death
inspires,

As rumour'd robberies endear our gold?

O Time! than gold more sacred! more a
load

Than lead, to fools! and fools reputed wise!

What moment's granted man, without ac-
count!

What years are squander'd, wisdom's debt
unpaid!—

Time, in advance, behind him hides his
wings,

And seems to creep, decrepit with his age;

Behold him, when past by; what then is seen,

But his broad pinions swifter than the winds?

And all mankind in contradiction strong,

Rueful, aghast! cry out on his career."

Night II.

(4.) Alfred the Great was one of the
wisest, the best and most beneficent mo-
narchs that ever swayed the sceptre of this
realm; and his example is highly memora-
ble.—“ Every hour of his life had its peculiar

business assigned it. He divided the day and night into three portions of eight hours each; and though much afflicted with a very painful disorder, assigned only eight hours to sleep, meals, and exercise; devoting the remaining sixteen, one half to reading, writing, and prayer, and the other to public business:" So sensible was this great man that Time was not a trifle to be dissipated, but a rich talent entrusted to him, and for which he was accountable to the great Dispenser of it. And surely, if a person like Him, in the highest station of life, amidst all the temptations of ease, and affluence, and pleasure, was thus careful to husband Time, and fill up the fleeting moments of life with some useful employ, how very inexcusable must it be in those, who have not such allurements, to murder their days, by indolence and dissipation! "An idle body," says Mr. Addison, "is a monster in the creation; all nature is busy about him." How wretched is it to hear people complain, that the day hangs heavy upon them! That they don't know what to do with themselves! How monstrous

are such expressions among creatures who can apply themselves to the duties of religion and meditation; to the reading of useful books; who may exercise themselves in the noble pursuits of knowledge and virtue, and every hour of their lives make themselves wiser and better than they were before.

(5.) We are told of Queen Elizabeth, That except when engaged by public or domestic affairs, and the exercises necessary for the preservation of her health and spirits, she was always employed in either reading or writing; in translating from other authors, or in compositions of her own; and that notwithstanding she spent much of her Time in reading the best writings of her own and former ages, yet she by no means neglected that best of books, the Bible: for proof of which, take her own words. "I walk," says she, "many times in the pleasant fields of the Holy Scriptures, where I plucke up the goodlisome herbes of sentences by pruning; eat them by reading; digest them by musing, and laie them up at length in the

hie seate of memory, by gathering them together ; that so having tasted their sweetness, I may the less perceive the bitterness of life." See her MSS. in the Bodleian Library, No. 235.

(6.) When Socrates, in Plato's *Phædo*, has proved the immortality of the soul, he considers it as a necessary consequence of the belief thereof, " That we should be employed in the culture of our minds ; in such care of them as shall not only regard that term, to which we give the name of Life, but also the whole which follows it ; in making ourselves as wise and good as may be ; since on it our safety entirely depends ; the soul carrying hence nothing with it, but its good or bad actions, its virtues or vices ; and these constitute its happiness or misery to all eternity." How might many a Christian redder, to think that this is the language of a Pagan mind ; a mind unenlightened with the bright splendors of gospel truth, and equally ignorant of a Saviour's merits, and of a Saviour's example !

(7.) Seneca, in his letters to Lucilius, assures him that there was not a day in which he did not either write something, or read and epitomise some good author: and Pliny in like manner, giving an account of the various methods he used, to fill up every vacancy of Time, after several employments which he enumerates, observes, "Sometimes I hunt; but even then, I carry with me a pocket-book, That whilst my servants are busied in disposing the nets and other matters, I may be employed in something that may be useful to me in my studies; and that, if I miss my game, I may at least bring home some of my thoughts with me, and not have the mortification of having caught nothing."

(8.) An Italian philosopher expressed in his motto, that "Time was his estate:" An estate indeed! which will produce nothing without cultivation; but will always abundantly repay the labours of industry, and satisfy the most extensive desires, if no part of it be suffered to lie waste by negligence, to be over-run with noxious plants, or laid out

for shew, rather than for use. “ The duties of man, as Dr. Johnson finely observes, are such as human nature does not willingly perform, and such, as those are inclined to delay, who yet intend sometime to fulfil them. It was therefore necessary that this universal reluctance should be counteracted, and the drowsiness of hesitation wakened into resolve. That the danger of procrastination should be always in view, and the fallacies of security be hourly detected. To this end all the appearances of nature uniformly conspire. Whatever we see on every side reminds us of the lapse of Time and the flux of life. The day and night succeed each other; the rotation of seasons diversifies the year; the sun rises, attains the meridian, declines and sets, and the moon every night changes its form. The Day has been considered as an image of the Year, and the year as the representation of Life. The Morning answers to the Spring, and the Spring to Childhood and youth; the Noon corresponds to the Summer, and the Summer to the strength of Manhood. The Evening is an emblem of Autumn, and

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Autumn of declining life. The Night, with its silence and darkness, shews the Winter, in which all the powers of vegetation are benumbed; and the Winter points out the time when life shall cease, with all its hopes and pleasures. If these parts of time were not variously coloured, we should never discern their departure or succession; but should live thoughtless of the past, and careless of the future; without will, and perhaps without power to compute the periods of life, or to compare the time which is already lost, with that which may probably remain. And yet it is certain that these admonitions of nature, however forcible, however importunate, are too often vain; and that many who mark with such accuracy the course of Time, appear to have little sensibility of the decline of Life. Every man has something to do, which he neglects; every man has faults to conquer, which he delays to combat. But,—let him who proposes his own happiness reflect, that while he forms his purpose, the Day rolls on, “and the Night cometh, when no man can work.”

(9.) Augustus Cæsar, a few moments before his death, asked his friends who stood by him, if they thought he had acted his part well; and upon receiving such an answer as was due to his merit, "Let me then," said he, "go off the stage with your applause;" using the expression with which the Roman actors made their exit, at the conclusion of a dramatic piece. Mr. Addison's remark on this incident is worthy of himself: "I could wish," says he, "that men, while they are in health, would consider well the nature of the part they are engaged in; and what figure it will make in the minds of those they leave behind them: whether it was worth coming into the world for; whether it be suitable to a reasonable being: In short, whether it appears graceful in this life, or will turn to an advantage in the next?—This kind of scrutiny would give them a true state of themselves, and incline them to consider seriously what they are about. One day would rectify the omissions of another, and make a man weigh all those indifferent actions, which,

though they are easily forgotten, must certainly be accounted for." Spectator, No. 317.

(10.) Plato somewhere advises his friend Archytas to consider, " That we are not born for ourselves alone; that our country, our parents, and our friends, have their respective claims upon us." The following story is not inapplicable. " Among the Indians, says Apuleius, there is an excellent set of men, called Gymnosophists: These I greatly admire; though not as skilled in propagating the vine, or in the arts of grafting or agriculture. They apply not themselves to till the ground, to search after gold, to break the horse, to tame the bull, to shear or feed sheep or goats.—What is it then that engages them?—One thing preferable to all these. Wisdom is the pursuit as well of the old men, the teachers, as of the young their disciples. Nor is there any thing among them that I do so much praise, as their aversion to sloth and idleness. When the tables are overspread, before the meat is set on them,

all the youths assembling to their meal are asked by their masters, In what useful task they have been employed from sun-rising to that time? One represents himself as having been an arbitrator, and succeeded by his prudent management in composing a difference; in making them friends, who were at variance. A second had been paying obedience to his parents' commands. A third had made some discovery by his own application, or learned something by another's instruction. The rest give an account of themselves in the same way.—He who has done nothing to deserve a dinner, is turned out of doors without one, and obliged to work, while the others enjoy the fruits of their application."

(11.) Epictetus has a fine chapter to inculcate the improvement of our Time and talents. "Remember," says he, "that the world is a theatre, and that your part in this drama of life is determined by THE POET *. Upon Him it must depend, whether you shall

* ΠΟΙΗΤΗΣ, the great *Maker* and *Framer* of all things.

act a long or short one ; whether your character shall be high or low. If therefore, he assign you that of a beggar, take care to fill it well ; if a cripple, or a prince, or a private obscure man, or whatever it be, make the best of it. For consider, that the acting of the part assigned you commendably depends upon yourself : this is your business ; but the giving out of the parts, and choosing the actors, is not yours, but another's province."

(12.) How different is the view of past life, in the man who is grown old in knowledge and wisdom, from that of him who is grown old in ignorance and folly ? The latter is like the owner of a barren country, that fills his eye with the prospect of naked hills and plains, which produce nothing either profitable or ornamental. The other beholds a beautiful and spacious landscape, divided into beautiful gardens, green meadows, fruitful fields ; and can scarce cast his eye on a single spot of his possessions, that is not covered with some beautiful plant or flower. See Spectator, No. 94.

(13.) One comfort of age, says Sir William Temple, may be, That whereas young men are usually in pain, when they are not in pleasure, old men find a sort of pleasure, whenever they are out of pain: And, as young men often lose or impair their present enjoyments, by raving after what is to come, by vain hopes or fruitless fears; so old men relieve the wants of their age, by pleasing reflections upon what is past. Therefore, men in the health and vigour of their age, should endeavour to fill their lives with reading, with travel, with the best conversation, and the worthiest actions, either in their public or private stations, that they may have something agreeable left to feed on when they are old, by pleasing remembrances." See his Essay on Health and long Life. Works, vol. iii. p. 300.

(14.) Procrastination, or delay, is well defined, "The thief of Time;" it not only steals us from duty, but from ourselves. To-morrow, may the procrastinator say,—To-morrow is still the fatal Time when all is to be done,

or to be rectified : To-morrow comes, it goes, and still I please myself with the shadow, whilst I lose the reality : unmindful that the present Time alone is ours ; the future is yet unborn, and the past is dead ; and can only live,—as parents in their children,—in the actions it has produced. The Time we live ought not to be computed by the Number of years, but by the Use which has been made of them. 'Tis not the extent of the ground, but the yearly rent, that gives value to the estate.

(15.) We will conclude these anecdotes, with recommending to our readers (in the excellent words of the Guardian) this short self-examination, “ What have ye been doing ? ” And if every one of them seriously lays his hand upon his heart, and considers what he is doing, it will check him in all the idle, or, what is worse, the vicious moments of life ; will lift up his mind, when it is running on in a series of indifferent actions ; and encourage him in those which are virtuous and laudable. In a word, it

will very much alleviate that guilt, which the best of men have reason to acknowledge, in their daily confessions ; of “ leaving undone those things which they ought to have done, and of doing those things which they ought not to have done.”

S E R M O N XVII.

P A R T II.

On the INDUSTRIOUS Employment of
T I M E.

PROVERBS vi. 6, 8.

*Go to the Ant, thou sluggard, consider her ways,
and be wise : which, having no guide, over-
seer, or ruler, provideth her meat in the
summer, and gathereth her food in the
harvest.*

“ I T'is not enough, we have observed, to
employ our Time, we must employ it
well ;” we cannot employ it well, unless we
give to INDUSTRY the hours which we
mean to improve for our present and eternal
welfare. Here too again the little “ Ant”
supplies us with an instructive lesson : for she
not only husbands, with provident wisdom,
the short season allotted for gathering her

future supply; but, with unwearied Industry and attention, applies every moment of that season to the business for which it is given. But not the Ant alone; all "Nature," my young friends, loudly preaches this virtue to you; which has besides the awful sanction of "Revelation" to enforce its practice; together with the clearest dictates of "Reason," of present and of future happiness.

Perhaps it may seem some objection to this position, that labour and toil were enjoined upon our first father, as the punishment of his disobedience, and as part of his curse. But let me ask, can we conceive, that if Adam had never transgressed, he would have passed a life of indolence and inactivity, without any application or exercise of his mental or bodily powers? Short as is the history of his perfect state, it gives us no room for any such imagination; but on the contrary informs us, that the *Lord God put the man*, whom he had formed, *into the garden*

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of Eden, to DRESS and to KEEP it *; which certainly, at the least, implies, that he was not to be void of some occupation and employment: nay, and the reason given, why the Lord caused the earth at first to produce spontaneously plant and herb, is, that there was *not yet a man to TILL the ground* †. That ground, most probably, in its primæval state, would have answered freely and luxuriantly to the tiller's care: Free from those noxious thorns and weeds which require so much attention to eradicate, its cultivation would have been easy and pleasant, and its produce certain; nor would there have been occasion for that painful tillage, those constant fatigues of the laborious husbandman, so necessary now to obtain its precious bounties. But to suppose that man in Paradise and perfection, would have had no business for his hands, no call to diligence and activity, is no less absurd, than it seems contrary to all our ideas of human nature and this sublunary

* See Gen. ii. 15.

† Gen. ii. 5.

world. Indeed we have no conception, we can have no conception of total inactivity in rational beings, of any, even of the most exalted kind. Accordingly we find the sovereign Father himself, as well as his blessed Son, engaged in a variety of works of Creation, of Providence, of Redemption. *My Father worketh hitherto, saith Christ, and I work* *. And the eternal Spirit is represented in the sacred records to us, as unceasingly operating in the great business of human salvation, illuminating and sanctifying the souls of men.

If from the Deity we descend to the highest order of celestial beings, to Angels; we find them too described as the most active messengers and ministers of their God, continually employed in performing the important mandates of their Almighty King, “servants of his, and doing his pleasure;” for which they are peculiarly calculated, as

* John v. 17.

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excelling in strength; swift as the winds,
bright and executive as a flame of fire *.

Nor are we to conceive, when we drop this cumbrous load of flesh, and the corporeal calls to industry cease, that in the future and blessed state which we hope to inherit, inactivity shall take place, and a vacancy from all employments ensue. We are told of the Blessed in Heaven, that they *REST not day and night*, praising God, and celebrating his glory †. Now though, amidst our present dark and confined apprehensions; we can form but very incomplete and imperfect ideas of the future world; yet from the very nature of rational existence we certainly may draw some probable conclusions: And, well assured of the negative felicities of that world, which we are informed will be wholly exempt from the distressful evils of mortality, from sin, from sorrow, from pain, and from death; which will no more oppress us with the im-

* See Heb. i. 7. Psal. xviii. 10.

† Revel. iv. 8.

portunate demands of hunger, thirst, or sleep, those mighty invaders of our present Time, and thought, and pains; We may remain satisfied, that its positive blessings will be sufficient to fill up the powers of our souls, and to afford continual and delightful occupations, equal to the enlargement and activity of our faculties.

But if God, if Angels, if beatified Saints, unite to inculcate the necessity, and consequently the happiness of employment and Industry; you will find the great lesson, my young friends, no less forcibly impressed, from the consideration of your own nature, and of the world around you. Man cannot even exist, much less exist in health and safety, and still much less in convenience and elegance, without the exertions of Industry. Providence hath so formed us, that as diligence and exercise are indispensibly requisite to the improvement of our minds, and the health of our bodies; so nothing can be attained for the advantage of the one or of the other, without that exercise and diligence. Leave

the mind uncultivated; apply no pains or attention to its information and instruction: suffer the body to rest in torpid indolence, and inactive sloth: and the latter will not be more miserable and diseased, than the former will be stupid, vicious, and unhappy: while both will represent a foul and stagnating lake, whose putrefying waters, useless to every end of life, produce only noxious and poisonous vermin. On the contrary, like the clear river,—which refines as it flows, gladdening and fertilizing every land through which it glides,—is that man, who with diligence and industry fills up the duties of his station; accumulating to himself the best advantages, while of the utmost service to society in general. And as that society could not subsist without activity and industry, and as we all are so much interested not only in its subsistence, but in its regular and proper subsistence; it follows that our call to industry and activity in our proper sphere, is no less loud, no less important, than our call to support ourselves in being, and in all

the blessings which we derive from commerce and communication with our fellow-mortals.

But not our own Nature, which owes its growth, its improvement, its health, its pleasures, and its comforts to diligence and industry; not Society, which owes to them its being, its continuance, its advantages; Not these alone enjoin the duty. *Go to the Ant, thou sluggard*; Go to the Animal world, and read there in plainest characters, the reproof of those, who dare disclaim the dictates of their nature, *hide their hands in their bosom, and refuse to labour*! Let the birds of the air, and the beasts of the field instruct thee: Active for their own preservation and welfare, they are diligent to provide their food, and to exert their best talents in defence of themselves and their young. Nor can any degree of blameable or prejudicial indolence, be charged to any one species of the brutal kind.—I had forgot: For the reproof of the slothful and lazy, Providence

hath created one animal *, the very opprobrium of the race; to hold forth, as in a glass, the detestable scorn of a vice, which brings to misery and distress, and *shall clothe a man with rags* †.

From the divine, the angelic, the rational, the animal nature, I might proceed to the Inanimate world; and shew, how by a constant recurrence of agency and activity the whole round of material creation is carried on and supported. “The heavenly bodies are ever moving with constancy and punctuality, to perform their several courses; and are hereby, at least, of service to us, whether they answer any higher, farther purpose or not. The elements composing this sublunary world are likewise in the same useful motion; supporting each other by a

* It is the American SLOTH or Sluggard I mean; the very emblem of the vice whose name it bears: and concerning which I omit to say more, as I have given a long account of it in the Christian's Magazine, vol. i. p. 114, to which I refer my reader.

† Proverbs xxiii. 21.

circulation of active offices and transmutations. The stagnation of some would prove the destruction of all, at least as to their use, though not existence. And though these all act involuntarily, by an external force impressed upon them, which they cannot resist; yet they fulfil hereby the will of their creator, and manifest it to others: and the argument drawn from such analogy is not weak or inconsiderable. It shews that it was the general design of Providence, that the welfare of the universe should be carried on by action and employment, and that every part of it should bear testimony against sloth and idleness. Nay, indeed, the very creation of that universe is the fullest testimony against them. A wise and intelligent Author must propose some end in the production of things: but this end, whatever it was, could never be promoted by indolence and sloth. Non-activity is the next degree to non-existence; and could no more answer any useful purpose. A production of stupid, unmoving, passive beings, could be no other than a general chaos; which could prove of no farther uti-

lity, than as affording matter for future motion, harmony and order *."

Thus "all Nature" through all her works loudly proclaims the necessity and the advantage of activity and diligence. And perfectly consonant to the instruction of this great volume of the Creator's works, are the dictates of that other BOOK, stamped with the infallible signature of his divine authority. It would be endless to quote particular passages: I need only refer you to the book of Proverbs; and I do with singular pleasure refer you to it, as conscious of the many advantages which will follow from an attentive perusal of that most instructive book; where you will find useful admonitions on every topic of wisdom, and many on that of Industry, in particular: a virtue of whose utility and importance the royal writer seems especially to have been convinced, and consequently, in the highest degree solicitous to enforce its practice. Nor can any

* See Dodwell's Discourses.

thing be conceived more forcible and pointed, than a variety of the images and expressions which he employs to decry and ridicule the opposite vice. Take one example, as a specimen of the rest: "I went by the field of the SLOTHFUL, and by the vineyard of the man void of understanding: and lo, it was all grown over with thorns, and nettles had covered the face thereof, and the stone wall thereof was broken down. Then I saw and considered it well: I looked upon it, and received instruction. Yet a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep, So shall thy poverty come as one that travel-
leth, and thy want as an armed man *."

In perfect conformity herewith a much greater than Solomon, both by his precepts and example, discourages the slothful and useless, the idle and unprofitable; those who improve not their talents, nor keep their lamps trimmed and burning; while he marks out emphatically the advantages of

* Prov. xxiv. 30.

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Diligence and application, by declaring, that *unto him who hath* (and improveth what he hath) *shall be given, and he shall have more abundance: while from him that hath not, shall be taken away, even that which he seemeth to have* *. And to give the strongest authority to his precepts, his whole life was one scene of action and industry: *He went about doing good*. Unwearied in the blessed office, he denied himself even the necessary refreshments of nature, that he might administer to the spiritual and temporal necessities of mankind; and fulfil the great duties of his important mission. *My meat, said he, is to do the will of him who sent me, and to finish his work* †. And as he was thus, in the solemn business of his administration, a pattern of industry to all his followers; so it has been thought by some, that he chose to be born of laborious parents, and to occupy himself for the major part of his life in the honest

* See Matt. xiii. 12, and the Parables of the Talents, the Ten Virgins, the unprofitable Servant, &c.

† John iv. 3, 4.

duties of their calling, not only to give mankind a striking example of humility, but of diligence and application to the proper duties of their sphere.

His immediate disciples and followers trod closely in the steps of his bright example: Indeed the business in which they were engaged called for the utmost exertion of their powers; nor was the gospel to be propagated without unfainting labour, perseverance and activity: Hence the exhortations ran, that *they who laboured in the word and doctrine, should be counted worthy of double honour.* And one of the most illustrious of those labourers, whose own unparalleled Industry gave him abundant authority to enforce the virtue, as in a variety of other places, so in the following, strongly exhorts to its practice: *Yourselves know, saith he, how ye ought to follow us: for we behaved not ourselves disorderly among you, neither did we eat any man's bread for nought, but wrought with labour and travel night and day, that we might not be chargeable to any of you: not because we have not power,*

but to make ourselves an ensample to you to follow us. For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, THAT IF any MAN WOULD NOT WORK, NEITHER SHOULD HE EAT. For we hear that there are some who walk among you disorderly, working not at all, but are busy bodies. Now them who are such, we command and exhort by our Lord Jesus Christ, that with quietness they work, and eat their own bread.*

Can any words more forcibly inculcate the necessity of honest and laborious industry upon Christians? Can any words more forcibly and clearly reprove the absurdity and wickedness of those, who under pretence of Christianity, devote their lives to sloth and idleness; to the dream of useless contemplation, and the dronish inactivity of a cloister?—And once more, let me ask, can any words be imagined less like those of a cheat and impostor, than this solemn appeal of our apostle to his own laborious and disinterested conduct;—his purpose to shew himself an example of a virtue, so beneficial to the true interest of man?

* 2 Thess. iii. 7, &c.

For not "Nature" and "Revelation" only, "Reason" too, especially, as directing us to pursue our present and future good, in its strongest force obliges to the industrious employment of our Time and our talents.

Yes, my young friends, would you enjoy either happiness of mind or body, would you live comfortably in this world, or wish to enjoy the eternal glories of the next; you must fly from the base enervating indulgences of sloth and indolence, and give yourselves up to the ceaseless, self-rewarding toils of honest industry. Think not this any hardship, any difficulty proposed to you: think not, with the giddy and inconsiderate, application a burthen, and diligence a seclusion from pleasure. Yet, were it so, is not the attainment of everlasting peace and rest well worthy all the pains which we can bestow in this short period of life?—for what are twenty, what are threescore Years, when compared to an eternity *!—This however,

* See p. 175, &c. foregoing.

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is so far from being the truth, that LABOUR itself becomes the highest pleasure* to the virtuous mind, especially as it bestows the most valuable gratifications. It is in this view especially, that I would recommend the practice to you: And consider a moment, what blessing, what satisfaction is there, which Time or eternity bestows, attainable without Industry? Health, honour, riches, wisdom, chearfulness, self-enjoyment, approbation of conscience and approbation of God, are the noble train which always accompany this distinguished virtue; not to speak of the security from a number of spiritual and temporal evils, which they share, who live beneath the shelter of its banners.

HEALTH, that prime blessing of the human life, is not to be possessed, or if possessed will soon be forfeited, without industry and exercise: They string the nerves, improve the constitution, prevent diseases, give strength and vigour: they create an appetite for en-

* "Labor ipse Voluptas," says the poet.

joyment, as well as enjoyment for the appetite, and qualify for much higher states of pleasure, than the slothful indulgence of the Sensualist and Epicure can ever attain. And what the wise man observes, with regard to the refreshment of that rest, which is earned by toil and business, holds good of every bodily enjoyment: *The sleep of a labouring man is sweet, whether he eat little or much* *.

HONOUR too is the natural consequence of Industry: *Seest thou a man diligent in his business?* says Solomon, *he shall stand before kings, he shall not stand before mean men* †. For diligence creates esteem and confidence: it soon attracts the observation, and consequently the regard of mankind. Every one, for their own sake, will chuse to be concerned with a person of that character in every office of life. And as this inclination depends not on the generosity, but the interest of mankind, it will certainly and invariably prove highly beneficial to the industri-

* Eccles. v. 12.

† Prov. xxii. 29.

ous man. The king of Israel's motive for the advancement of Jeroboam, is founded in reason and nature; and therefore will ever more or less prevail. *Solomon, seeing the young man, THAT HE WAS INDUSTRIOUS, he made him ruler over all the charge of the house of Joseph* *.

With Health and Honour come RICHES to the diligent: *The hand of the diligent maketh rich; but the soul of the sluggard desireth, and bath nothing.* Industry enables a man to be useful to himself, and frequently to be serviceable to those in distress: places him above all reasonable apprehensions of want, and qualifies him to assist others. It raises a fortune frequently, and a maintenance almost always, with credit and success; by real use, and therefore with true satisfaction. On this account the delight of enjoying the fruit of one's own industry, is so often and so emphatically spoken of in the old Testament, *Thou shalt eat the labour of thine hands: Oh*

* 1 Kings xi. 28.

*well art thou, and happy shalt thou be *!* And surely there is a singular complacency in the consciousness of owing to our own diligence, under Providence, the blessings we enjoy; especially in having promoted some business of public service, as well as of private advantage. The glory is natural and laudable, and gives a relish to the plainest as well as the most sumptuous fare.

But WISDOM more invaluable than rubies, with whom are *riches and honour, and whose fruit is better than gold*, this excellent Wisdom too is utterly unattainable without Industry: for the mind like the body requires exercise to its growth and health; and if deprived of that exercise, will stagnate in ignorance, or grow foul with the poisonous productions of vice. While Industry not only enlarges our mental faculties, and improves our actual knowledge, but creates, as it were, a new capacity for higher improvements †.

* Psalm cxxviii. 2.

† See Dodwell on Industry; to whose excellent discourse, I have been much obliged in the latter part of this sermon. See

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It carries us still farther and farther in the pleasing pursuits of Wisdom, and inspires a perpetual wish and ardour to know more, the more we become acquainted with her beauty and excellence.

Can it be wondered, my young friends, that CHEARFULNESS and SELF-ENJOYMENT are the natural and certain consequences of so well-directed, so advantageous a virtue? The body in health, the character in respect, the circumstances easy, the mind enlarged,—with what complacence and approbation will the conscience give her testimony; and how must the whole man rejoice in the review of the propriety of his conduct, and consequently in the approbation of his God! that God, who as we have observed, throughout his works, teaches the great duty of Industry, and with peculiar force impresseth it in the sacred volume of revealed truth; and who, in characters equally legible, hath stamped his awful sanction on its practice, by making it, as it

also the Christian's Magazine, vol. i. p. 308, and Delancy's Sermons on the social duties; Sermon 17.

were, the necessary vehicle of every good to man ! while Indolence and Sloth, those worst defects of the mind, not only sap the foundation of every virtue, and give a tincture of their nature to every action ; but deprive of all the comforts of Time, and all the glories of futurity. Indeed, the natural and unavoidable consequence of Idleness is not mere loss of comfort, but certain acquisition of evil and misery. It exposes to the whole train of vices and mischiefs, to the force of each separate allurements, and to the united strength of all bad dispositions. It is itself a state of temptation ; for our nature is so little calculated for mere inactivity, that he who has no proper employment, will of course be wandering after that which is improper ; and if doing nothing, will assuredly be led to doing ill. So that in this respect also, as a preservative from spiritual and temporal evils, great is the praise, and inestimable are the advantages of Industry.

Youth too is the season when habits of Industry are not only most easily acquired,

but when we are in every respect best qualified for its exertions. It is the season for action and diligence, which by custom will become delightful, and render Sloth as hateful as it is despicable: which will make the present period pleasing, and make the latter part of life chearful and honourable: blessings utterly unattainable, if this season, this irrecoverable period is neglected and abused! A habit of sloth contracted in early years, cuts off the very disposition to this virtue*:

* This habit is the more carefully to be avoided, as there seems in human nature a strange propensity to it. "There is," says a complainer of idleness in the Spectator, "scarce any one person without some allay of it; and thousands, besides myself, spend more Time in an idle uncertainty, which to begin first of two affairs, than would have been sufficient to end them both. The occasion of this seems to be the want of some necessary employment to put the spirits in motion, and awaken them out of their lethargy. If I had less leisure, I should have more: for I should then find my Time distinguished into portions, some for business, others for the indulging of pleasures: But now one face of indolence over-spreads the whole, and I have no land-mark to direct myself by. Were one's Time a little straitened by business, like water inclosed in its banks, it would have some determined course: but unless it be put into some channel, it has no current, but becomes a deluge, without use or motion." See No. 316.

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and if Providence awakens men, or necessity drives them to make the attempt, their endeavours are and must be made with much greater difficulty, and much less perfection.

Improve therefore to your own great happiness this important period of your life, by habituating yourselves, my young friends, to Diligence and Industry. Consider your Time and your talents, as great deposits, intrusted to your care by the sovereign Lord of all things, and as deposits of whose improvement he expects you to give a good account; not for His sake, nor for His advantage, but for your own sakes, and for your own advantage: that having much, the liberal Benefactor may amply reward your fidelity and application, by giving you more, even an abundance of his superlative blessings. Nor think any place or rank in life, any superiority of wealth or station, an exemption from payment of the universal demand of Industry. It is the demand of Nature, it is the demand of Society, it is the demand of Reason and of God: and He acts in palpable contrariety to

all these, who lives a life of idleness and inutility, a burthen to himself, and a nuisance to others. For not the poor Hind only, who is compelled to labour for his daily bread; not the children of necessity, who, thrown unsupported upon the lap of earth, are urged to continual industry, for the maintenance of themselves and families: not these only, but every child of man is bound to cultivate this virtue, if he means to enjoy a sound mind in a sound body; to do his duty to society and himself; to improve the faculties which God has given him, and to implant in his soul those divine graces, which shall grow and flourish to perfection in eternity.

If therefore, my young friends, Providence, in its bounty, has happily given you an exemption from servile toil and more laborious pursuits, Shew your gratitude, by a more diligent and painful improvement of your mental powers. Think it your duty, and as such make it your business, to contribute by your growing virtue and wisdom to the felicity of your fellow creatures. Industriously

and diligently occupy yourselves in searching for and communicating Good and happiness, as extensively as you may: and be well assured, that in proportion as you thus employ yourselves, and improve your minds, you will advance your own happiness also, and partake of the truest pleasures which human nature can share or impart. Which, &c.

ANECDOTES respecting INDUSTRY.

(1.) The Court of the Areopagites was the most honourable in the city of Athens. In this solemn audience it was most diligently inquired, What manner of life each Athenian led; what kind of income or revenue he enjoyed; and by what means it was that he maintained himself and family. They were taught to follow some honest course of life, as knowing they were to give a publick account thereof; and if any man was convicted of idleness, or a reproachful way of life, he had a brand of infamy fixed upon him, or else was driven out of the city, as an unprofitable and pernicious member. By

this exemplary procedure they put sloth and indolence out of countenance, and filled their commonwealth with examples of every kind of Industry, without fear of incurring the danger of a public accusation. Had we these Areopagites among us, (says one) how many idle fellows, who now live by plunder, by sharpening young gentlemen at play, or by setting and drawing in apprentices to rob their masters, would be obliged to lay by the Sword they have impudently assumed, together with the title of Gentlemen; and return to the honest Trades, to which they were brought up, or at least by some other way made useful to the public! In short, what an alteration should we find for the better, did we follow the wisdom of these ancients, in enacting and enforcing laws against idleness; which should make every man give an account of his Time, and be answerable for his way of life.

(2.) A modern Poet has finely pointed out in the following lines, that Idleness, whether public or private, is not only unnatural and

impolitick, but the fertile source of evil,
both to individuals and the common wealth :

“ Nature lives by TOIL ;
Beast, bird, air, fire, the Heavens and rolling
world,
All live by action : Nothing lies at rest,
But Death and Ruin. Man is born to care ;
Fashion'd, improv'd by labour. This of old
Wise states observing, gave that happy law,
Which doom'd the rich and needy, every rank
To manual occupation ; and oft call'd
Their chieftains from the spade, or furrowing plow,
Or bleating sheep-fold. Hence Utility
Through all conditions ; hence the joys of health :
Hence strength of arm, and clear judicious thought ;
Hence corn, and wine, and oil, and all in life
Delectable. What simple Nature yields,
(And Nature does her part) are only rude
Materials, cumbrous on the thorny ground :
’Tis TOIL that makes them Wealth.”

(3.) It is not to effeminate Prayers (says
Cato) that the Gods grant their assistance :
They have their ears open to the industrious
man, who begs their assistance at the same

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Time that he employs his own Endeavours. They hate idleness; and the prayers of the slothful are more likely to draw down their indignation than their aid *. Labour and Industry are the price which they have set upon the blessings of this world, and those who will enjoy them may purchase them at that rate.—Cicero adds, that our Maker alone will inform us, that we are not placed in the world for our diversion, to follow our pleasures only, and sit as idle spectators. No life, therefore, can be pleasing to God, but that which is also useful to mankind.

(4.) There are some, says Dr. Johnson, who possess idleness in its full dignity; who call themselves “the Idle,” as Busris in the play calls himself “the Proud;” who boast that they do nothing, and thank their stars they have nothing to do; who sleep every night till they can sleep no longer; and rise only that exercise may enable them to sleep again: who prolong the reign of darkness

* See Æsop’s Fable of Hercules and the Carter. Fable 56, of Croxall’s edition.

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by double curtains, and never see the sun; but to "tell him how they hate his beams *."

Whose whole labour is to vary the postures of indulgence; and whose day differs from their night, but as a couch or chair differs from a bed. These are the true and open votaries of idleness, for whom she weaves the garland of poppies, and into whose cup she pours the waters of oblivion; who exist in a state of unruffled stupidity, forgetting and forgotten; who have long ceased to live, and at whose death the survivors can only say, "That they have ceased to breathe." Idler, No. 31.

(5.) At Athens there were two poor young men, Menedemus and Asclepiades, who were greatly addicted to the study of philosophy. They had no visible means of support, yet kept up their plight and colour, looked hale, well, and in good condition. The Judges † had information given them of the retired life of these two, and of their neither having any

* Paradise Lost, b. iv. l. 37.

† See Anecdote the 1st.

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thing to live on, nor apparently doing any thing to maintain themselves: consequently, as they could not live without sustenance, it was inferred they must have some clandestine means of subsisting. Upon this ground of information the young men were summoned before the Judges, and ordered to answer to the charge. One of the accused, after saying that little credit was given to what a man could urge in his own defence, (it being natural to believe that every criminal will either deny or extenuate the crimes he is charged with) and adding, that the testimony of a disinterested person was not liable to suspicion; desired that a certain baker, whom he named, might be summoned, and answer for them. Accordingly the baker being come, declared that the young men under examination took it by turns to grind his corn every night; and that for the night's work he every morning paid the young man who ground at the hand mill a drachma, that is, about a groat. The Judges, surprized at their abstinence and industry, ordered, as a

reward of their virtue, that 200 drachmas should be paid them out of the public money.

(6.) We have heretofore observed, that when the Roman historians describe an extraordinary man, it always enters into his character as an essential, That he was “*incredibili industriâ,*”—“*diligentiâ singulari;*” of incredible industry, of singular diligence: And Cato, in Sallust, tells the senate, That it was not the Arms so much as the Industry of their ancestors, which advanced the grandeur of Rome. So that the founders and regulators of this state, in making diligence and labour necessary qualifications of a citizen, took the same course as the poet mentions Jupiter to have thought of, when he succeeded to the government over the primitive mortals.

——— *Pater ipse colendi*

*Haud facilem esse viam voluit, primusque per
artem*

*Movit agros, curis acuens mortalia corda;
Nec torpere gravi passus sua regna veterno*.*

* Virgil. Georgic. i. l. 121, &c.

This account of the providential utility of some seeming evils, is not only beautifully poetical, but strictly philosophical. Want is the origin of arts: infirmities and weaknesses are the cause and cement of human society. If man were perfect and self-sufficient, all the efforts of industry would be useless. A dead calm would reign over all the species. But hence, as the author of the *Essay on Man* observes,

Wants, frailties, passions, closer still ally
The common int'rest, and endear the tie.—
God, in the nature of each being, founds
Its proper bliss, and sets its proper bounds:
But as he fram'd a whole, the whole to bless,
On mutual wants built mutual happiness.

(7.) That famous disturber and scourge of mankind, Charles the XIIth of Sweden, used to say, “That by resolution and perseverance, a man might do every thing:” Now though we may not entirely agree with his Majesty, so far at least we may venture to observe, That every man may, by unremitting application and endeavours, do much

more than at the first setting out, he thought it possible that he ever could do. Virgil says, "Possunt, quia posse videntur; they can conquer, who believe they can." It behoves us much to distinguish between Difficulties and Impossibilities, which many people do not. The silly and the sanguine look upon impossibilities to be only difficulties; as on the other hand, the lazy and the timorous take every difficulty for an impossibility. "A greater knowledge of the world, as a celebrated genius observes, will teach young men the proper medium between these two extremes."

(8.) Those who have searched into human nature remark, That nothing so much shews the nobleness of the soul, as that its felicity consists in Action. I have heard (says the Spectator) of a gentleman, who was under close confinement in the Bastile seven years; during which time he amused himself in scattering a few small pins about his chamber, gathering them up again, and placing them in different figures on the arm of a great

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chair. He often told his friends afterwards, that unless he had found out this piece of exercise, he verily believed he should have lost his senses.

(9.) Sir William Temple, in his Heads for an Essay on the different conditions of life and fortune, pleasantly tells us, of “ an old man near the Hague; who (says he) served my house from his dairy, and grew so rich, that he gave it over; bought a house and furnished it at the Hague, resolving to live at ease the rest of his life: But at length, grew so weary of being idle, that he sold it, and returned again to his dairy.” See his Works; vol. iii. p. 516, 8vo. There are many similar instances to this in more modern days*.

(10.) “ Love labour, cried a philosopher; if you do not want it for food, you may for physick.” He is idle, that might be better employed. The idle man is more perplexed what to do, than the industrious in doing what he ought. Action keeps the soul in constant health, but idleness corrupts

* See the Papers on “ Retirement” in the Visitor, vol. i.

and rusts the mind: For a man of great abilities may, by negligence and idleness, become so mean and despicable, as to be an incumbrance to society, and a burthen to himself. "There are but very few, says Mr. Addison, who know how to be idle and innocent." By doing nothing, we learn not only to do ill, but to suffer it too; and he that follows recreations instead of his business, shall in a little Time have no business to follow.

(11.) Indolence is a stream which flows slowly on, but yet undermines the foundation of every virtue. It were as little hazard to be tossed in a storm, as to lie thus perpetually becalmed; nor is it to any purpose to have within one the seeds of a thousand good qualities, if we want the vigour and resolution necessary for the exerting them. That the necessity of labour ought to be regarded as a punishment, is a mean and sordid notion, invented by the effeminate, the lazy, and the vicious. On the contrary, if God had prohibited labour, such prohibition might justly

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have been deemed a token of his displeasure; since inaction is a kind of lethargy, equally pernicious to the mind and body. An effeminate Sybarite, we are told, thanked the Gods very heartily, that he had never seen the sun rise in his life. Can there be a more striking emblem of a narrow and unenlightened mind?—of a wicked and unprofitable servant? Well and truly said Solomon, in this view, that “The slothful man is brother to him that is a great waster.” Prov. c. xviii. ver. 9.

(12.) “Whenever,” says the Guardian, “I am disposed to treat of the irreligion of an idle life, it shall be under this head, *Pereunt et imputantur* *;” which is an inscription upon a sun-dial, in one of the Inns of Court, and is with great propriety held forth to public view, in such a place, where, the inhabitants being in an everlasting hurry of business or pleasure, the Busy may receive an innocent

* That is, “They pass away, and are put to account.”
This inscription is still to be seen in the Temple.

admonition to keep their appointments, and the Idle not to keep theirs." Guardian, No. 131.

(13.) Demosthenes is an immortal instance of the noblest perseverance—the only virtue that is crowned. He was extremely affected with the honours which he saw paid to the orator Callistratus, and still more with the supreme power of eloquence over the minds of men; and not being able to resist its charms, he gave himself wholly up to it; from henceforth renounced all other studies and pleasures; and during the continuance of Callistratus at Athens, he never quitted him, but made all the improvement he could from his precepts. The first essay of his eloquence was against his guardians, whom he obliged to refund a part of his fortune. Encouraged by this event, he ventured to speak before the people, but with very ill success. He had a weak voice, a thick way of speaking, and a very short breath; notwithstanding which his periods were so long, that he was often obliged to stop in the midst

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of them for respiration. This occasioned his being hissed by the whole audience. As he withdrew, hanging down his head, and in the utmost confusion, Satyrus, one of the most excellent actors of those times, who was his friend, met him; and having learnt from himself the cause of his being so much dejected, assured him, That the evil was not without remedy, and that his case was not so desperate as he imagined. He desired him to repeat some of the verses of Sophocles and Euripides to him; which he did. Satyrus spoke them after him, and gave them such graces, by the tone, gesture and spirit with which he pronounced them, that Demosthenes himself found them quite different from what they were in his own manner of speaking. He perceived plainly what he wanted, and applied himself strenuously to the acquiring of it. His efforts to correct his natural defect of utterance, and to perfect himself in pronunciation, seem almost incredible, and prove (as Cicero remarks) that an industrious perseverance can surmount almost all things. He stammered to such a degree

that he could not pronounce some letters; among others, that with which the name of “ Rhetoric,” the art he studied, begins: He was also short-breath’d, as above-mentioned. These obstacles he overcame at length, by putting small pebbles into his mouth, pronouncing several verses in that manner without interruption, and accompanying it with walking, or going up steep and difficult places; so that at last no letter made him hesitate, and his breath held out through the longest periods. He went also to the sea side; and whilst the waves were in the most violent agitation, he pronounced harangues, both to strengthen his voice, and to accustom himself, by the confused noise of the waters, to the roar of the people, and the tumultuous cries of public assemblies. Demosthenes took no less care of his Action than of his Voice. He had a large looking-glass in his house, which served to teach him gesture, and at which he used to declaim, before he spoke in public. To correct a fault which he had contracted by an ill habit of shrugging up his shoulders, he practised standing

upright in a very narrow pulpit, or rostrum, over which hung an halberd, in such a manner, that if in the heat of action that motion escaped him, the point of the weapon might serve at the same time to admonish and correct him. His application to study was no less surprizing. To be the more removed from noise, and less subject to distraction, he shut himself up in a small room under ground, sometimes for months together; and there it was, by the light of his lamp, that he composed those admirable orations, which were said by them who envied him, to "smell of the oil;" to imply that they were too elaborate. Demosthenes heard them; and only told them in reply, "It is plain that yours did not cost you so much trouble." He rose constantly very early in the morning, and used to say, that he was sorry when any workman was at his business before him *. We may

* Cui non sunt auditæ Demosthenis vigilæ? Qui dolere se aiebat, si quando opificum ante Lucana victus esset industriâ.
Cic. Tusc. Quæst. l. iv. n. 44.

further judge of his extraordinary efforts to acquire excellence of every kind, from the pains he took in copying Thucydides's History eight times with his own hand, in order to render the stile of that great man familiar to him. And his labour was well bestowed; for it was by these means that he carried the art of declaiming to the highest degree of perfection of which it was capable; whence it is plain he well knew its value and importance. When he was asked three several times which quality he thought most necessary in an orator, he gave no other answer than "Pronunciation." Insinuating thereby, that qualification to be the only one, of which the want could least be concealed, and which was the most capable of concealing other defects; and that pronunciation alone could give considerable weight even to an indifferent orator; when without it, the most excellent could not hope for much success. As to Demosthenes, Cicero tells us, that his success was so great, that all Greece came in crowds to Athens, to hear him speak; and he

adds, that merit so great as his could not but have that effect *.

(14.) *Varia Servilius*, descended of a *Prætorian* family, was remarkable for nothing but sloth and indolence, in which he grew old and odious; infomuch that it was commonly said, by such as passed his house, "*Hic Varia situs est:*" Here lies *Varia*: speaking of him, as of a person, not only dead, but buried to all intents and purposes of rational existence.

(15.) It is said of the elder *Cato*, That to inflame the minds of his fellow soldiers to the love of industry, labour, and virtue, he used to address them in such memorials as the following:

* Here we cannot but take notice of the effect of good example. *Cicero*, who thus generously extols the great orator of Greece, himself took similar pains in youth, and with similar success, to acquire excellence, and command esteem. We refer for proof of this particularly to *Kennett's Essay on the Roman Education*, p. 28. prefixed to his *Roman Antiquities*.

“ Si cum labore quidpiam rectè geris,
Labor recedit, facta rectè permanent:
Quod si jocosè, nequiter quid egeris,
Abit voluptas; turpe factum permanet.”

When what is good you execute with pain,
The pain's soon past, the good deeds still
remain.

When slothfully or basely aught is done,
Those base deeds stay, when all the pleasure's
gone.

Indeed all the ancient Romans were such haters of idleness, That whereas in their Theology, Agenotia, who was to stir up to action; Stimula, who was to impel men to diligence; and Strenua, who was to give them constancy and firmness, were all three received as Deities, and were worshipped in Temples within the city; they would not receive Quies, or Rest, as a Goddess in public; but built a Temple for her in one of their high-ways, without the city walls. See Camerar. Opera. cent. i. c. 15.

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(16.) Dionysius the Elder, being asked, if he was at leisure, and had nothing of business to do; "The Gods forbid, cried he, that ever it should be so with me; for a bow, as they say, will break if it be over-bent; but the mind if it be over-slack." Plut. Mor.

(17.) When we observe the lives of those whom an ample inheritance has let loose to their own direction, what do we discover, that can excite our envy? Their Time seems not to pass away with much applause from others, or satisfaction to themselves. They are generally employed every morning in finding expedients to rid themselves of the day; chase Pleasure through all the places of public resort; and are continually changing one amusement for another, which a few months will make equally insipid; or sinking into languor and disease, for want of something to actuate their bodies, or exhilarate their minds. Whoever has frequented those places where idlers assemble to escape from solitude, knows that this, or worse, is generally the state of the wealthy; and from this state it is no great hardship to be debarred. No

man can be happy in total idleness: he that should be condemned to lie torpid and motionless, “ would fly for recreation, (says Dr. South) to the mines and the gallies.” And it is well when nature or fortune find employment for those, who would not have known how to procure it for themselves. See the Adventurer, No. 111.

(18.) About 50 years ago, the small territory of Cancar, known in the maritime charts under the name of Ponthiomas, was wholly uncultivated, and almost destitute of inhabitants. A Chinese merchant, commander of a vessel which he employed in commerce, frequented these coasts. Being a man of that intelligent reflective genius, which so characteristically marks his nation, he could not without pain behold immense tracts of ground condemned to sterility, though naturally more fertile than those which formed the riches of his own country; he constructed therefore a plan for their improvement. With this view, having first of all hired a number of labourers, some Chinese, others from the neighbouring nations, he with great address insinuated him-

self into the favour of the most powerful princes, who for a certain subsidy, assigned him a guard for his protection. In the course of his voyage to Batavia and the Philippine islands, he borrowed from the Europeans their most useful discoveries and improvements, particularly the art of fortification and defence : with regard to internal police, he gave the preference to the Chinese. The profits of his commerce soon enabled him to raise ramparts, sink ditches, and provide artillery. These preliminary precautions secured him a *coup de main*, and protected him from the enterprizes of the surrounding nations. He distributed the lands to his labourers, without the least reservation of any of those duties or taxes, known by the names of services, or fines of alienation ; duties, which, by allowing no real propriety, become the most fatal scourge to agriculture, and suggest an idea, which revolts against the common sense of every wise nation. He provided his colonists at the same time with all sorts of instruments proper for the labour and improvement of their grounds. In forming a

labouring and commercial people, he thought that no laws ought to be enacted, but those which nature has established for the human race in every climate: he made those laws respected by observing them first himself, and exhibiting an example of simplicity, industry, frugality, humanity, and good faith. He formed therefore no system of laws;—but he did more: he established morals. His territories soon became the country of every industrious man who wished to settle there. His port was open to all nations: the woods were cleared; the grounds judiciously laboured, and sown with rice; canals cut from the rivers watered their fields; and plentiful harvests, after supplying them with subsistence, furnished an object of extensive commerce. The barbarians of the neighbourhood, amazed to see abundance so suddenly succeed to sterility, flocked for subsistence to the magazine of Ponthiomas; whose dominions at this day, are considered as the most plentiful granary of that part of Asia; the Malais, the Cochin-Chinese, the Siamese, whose countries are naturally so fertile, considering

this little territory, as the most certain resource against famine,

(19.) While health and the flower and vigour of our age remain firm and intire, it behoves every thinking mind to lay them out to the best advantage; that so when the latter days take hold of us and despoil us of our strength and abilities, we may have a store moderately sufficient to subsist upon, laid up, in the morning of our life. The Ant, a creature truly provident and laborious, has always been proposed to us as an instance of industry: both Jew and gentile illustrate their reasonings on this head, by mentioning this little type of seasonable diligence. Solomon (as we have seen) seems to be in indignation with the lazy part of his species, and instead of arguing much with them, says, *Go to the Ant, thou sluggard!* Æsop has prettily elucidated the point, in his Fable of the Ant and Grasshopper; and Horace inspired by his own good sense, or perhaps having Solomon's address, or that Fable in his eye,

says, elegantly;—" *Exemplum magni formica laboris,*" &c. Sat. I. l. 33—38. Whoever therefore think fit to spend the prime of their life in useless diversions and unprofitable amusements, must not be surprized, if, thus contradicting the dictates of reason and of truth, they find themselves in the hoary winter of age, in a starving, unpitied, miserable condition.

(20.) As the great King Artaxerxes was travelling through the wide realms of Persia, a certain man, named Mises, presented him with a pomegranate of a wonderful bigness, which the king admiring, demanded out of what Paradise he had gotten it; he answered, that he had gathered it from his own garden, and cultivation. The king was exceedingly pleased with the present, and gracing him with royal gifts in return, swore by the Sun, "That the same man with like diligence and care, might as well of a little city make a great one." *Ælian, Var. Hist. l. i. c. 33.*

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(21.) A gentleman in Surry had a farm worth 200 *l. per annum*, which he kept in his own hands; but running out every year, he was necessitated to sell half of it to pay his debts, and lett the rest to a farmer for one and twenty years. Before the term was expired, the farmer one day bringing his rent, asked him if he would sell his land. "Why, said the gentleman, will you buy it?"—"Yes, if it please you," said the Farmer: "How! returned he, that's strange! Tell me how this comes to pass, that I could not live upon twice as much, being my own; and You, upon the half, though you have paid rent for it, are able to buy it?"—"Oh, Sir, said the farmer, but two words made the difference: You said Go, and I said Come.—" "What's the meaning of that?" says the gentleman. "Why, Sir," replied the other, you lay in bed, or took your pleasure, and sent others about your business; and I rose betimes, and saw my business done myself." See the Fable of the Lark and her young ones.

S E R M O N XVIII.

On the Honour, Profit, and Pleasure of RELIGION*.

PROVERBS iii. 13—18.

Happy is the man that findeth wisdom, and the man that getteth understanding. For the merchandise of it is better than the merchandise of silver, and the gain thereof than fine gold. She is more precious than rubies; and all the things thou canst desire, are not to be compared unto her. Length of days is in her right hand, and in her left hand riches and honour. Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace. She is a tree of life to them that lay hold upon her; and happy is every one that retaineth her.

WE boast of our Reason, and with justice we boast of it: 'tis a ray of

* I did intend to have given a Sermon on the advantages and blessings of Reputation; (see vol. i. p. 111.) but the volumes having already swelled beyond my intended compass, I omit the insertion of it, and refer my young readers to what I have said on the subject, in my Treatise for "the Consolation of the Afflicted." p. 244.

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the Divinity ; 'tis man's distinguishing prerogative. But the higher and more just our boast, the more blameable is our abuse, and the more punishable our disregard, of this Reason. It is given us, not only to direct us in the affairs of this life, but to advise us of our future and better concerns; and to suggest that attention to eternal things which their importance deserves. Yet it is but too obvious to every one's notice—nay, the experience of the generality proves but too fully—how much the serious dictates of reason are despised, with respect to futurity: and how much, in utter contempt of its admonitions, the happiness of the present world is preferred to the happiness of the future one: I should have said, “ The imaginary happiness:” For it is an incontestible truth, to which Time and Wisdom have fixed their invariable seal, that earthly enjoyments alone, of what sort or what degree soever, are incapable of giving solid felicity: and that whoever runs the round of worldly pleasures and pursuits, will find in the end a miserable vacuity in his

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mind; will find that "vanity and vexation" must be stamped upon them all.—This is not the suggestion of fancy, or the gloomy representation of moroseness and melancholy: nor will it follow, because real and substantial bliss is not, cannot be attained from the transitory things of this life, that therefore no real or substantial bliss can be attained at all. What hath been offered in the preceding discourses, as well as what remains to be urged, will, I trust, sufficiently prove the contrary. But let any one consult the testimony and experience of all mankind, so far as it can be had, in all ages of the world; let him consider the nature of the human soul, and the Creator's design in forming such a race of beings as we are; let him consider the dictates of impartial reason; and after this, let him listen to the voice of God's Revelation; and it will appear to him clearer than the mid-day light, that "as man was never made for Time and Earth, so nothing merely temporal or earthly can make man truly happy."

Yet man may be happy : happy in a high degree in this life, fore-taste of the complete happiness which is reserved for him hereafter. For as it is absurd to suppose (alas ! that our practice should render the supposition less absurd !) that God should create an immortal, spiritual being, merely for the ends of temporal existence, and whose chief good should be placed in worldly and corporeal gratifications ;—what need of an immortal soul for this ? what need of faculties superior to those of the brute creation ?—As this very supposition is absurd ; so is it no less absurd to suppose, that a God of infinite love and unbounded goodness should create a race of beings like the human, to pass away their wretched lives here in continual disquietude and ceaseless perplexity. It is absurd to suppose that He hath given us faculties and senses, and yet made the proper gratification of them unlawful and criminal : It is absurd to suppose, that he hath made the condition of our existence tormenting ; that he designs to try us with temptations, which our nature cannot withstand, and to make the price of

future bliss, the abjuration and extinction of all present.

No; far different is the love of God to his creatures: all his dispensations towards them are mercy and truth: And they who represent him as severe to those creatures, and enjoining tasks hard and nearly impossible to be performed, greatly injure the amiable Author of all bounty, and calumniate that “divine Religion” which he hath instituted, and which is the certain introduction to “Pleasantness and Peace.” For it is an unquestionable truth, that to walk in the paths, which he hath enjoined, is to secure to ourselves the most perfect felicity which our present state will admit; and that our misery and unhappiness arise in proportion to our deviation from that “peaceful and pleasant path.”—An observation, my young friends, which must above all others recommend the Religion of Jesus Christ to you, and make you anxious to establish in your hearts, that kingdom of God*, which will

* See Luke xvii. 21.

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procure you at once the highest “Honour,” the greatest “Advantage,” the purest and most perfect “Pleasure.” It is in that view, and as the close of all I have to offer for your instruction and emolument, that I would wish to enforce upon you the sincere and diligent practice of genuine CHRISTIANITY.

The fine encomium passed upon WISDOM, by one of the wisest men that ever wrote, which I have made the foundation of this discourse, might serve of itself to prove what I have asserted; for his authority cannot fail to sway much with you, especially when you remember that his writings have received the sanction of divine inspiration. And HE pronounceth the man happy, who obtaineth WISDOM; that is, right Religion; the true knowledge and love of God *. He assures us, that it is “Advantageous:” “The merchandize of it is better than the merchandize of silver, and the gain thereof than fine gold. It is more precious than

* See vol. ii. p. 4.

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rubies," continues the elegant Solomon, "and all the things thou can'st desire, are not to be compared unto her." In particular, "length of days is in her right hand, and in her left hand riches"—the ever-durable riches of immortality and glory—and not riches only, but also "Honour;"—the honour which comes from God, and which shall reflect from the brightness of his presence upon all his blessed attendants. Nor is it "Advantageous" and "Honourable" only, it is likewise highly "Pleasant."—"Her ways are ways of pleasantness,"—Pleasantness itself is with her; pure, unmixed, steadfast and satisfying: "all her paths are peace;" even present and eternal peace: "for she is a tree of life, life immortal in the Paradise of God *," to them that lay hold of her, and happy is every one that retaineth her."

Thus you see the three great objects of all worldly desires join to recommend RELIGION to you; "Honour," "Profit," "Pleasure."

* See Gen. ii. 9, and compare Revel. xxii. 2, 14.

These shall be yours, these shall eternally be yours, in their highest perfection, if you are wise enough to lay hold of and retain this excellent wisdom, this pure and holy Religion, which unites to God, and establisheth the kingdom of Christ in the happy heart.

I. In the first place, HONOUR shall be yours. Such honour as imperfect sinful creatures like us might contemplate at a distance with wonder; but must consider as near to us, and capable of becoming our own, with the profoundest humiliation. For the eternal and omnipotent Lord of Heaven, whose word is life, and whose favour is the fulness of bliss, this adorable God of glory, will not only condescend to admit us to his courts, to hear and grant our petitions; but graciously to become our father, and to adopt us into his family and love. His only begotten Son will vouchsafe to be the advocate for us; and as in mercy unutterable he died to redeem, so doth he ever live to intercede for and bless us. While we continue in our

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rubies," continues the elegant Solomon, "and all the things thou can'st desire, are not to be compared unto her." In particular, "length of days is in her right hand, and in her left hand riches"—the ever-durable riches of immortality and glory—and not riches only, but also "Honour;"—the honour which comes from God, and which shall reflect from the brightness of his presence upon all his blessed attendants. Nor is it "Advantageous" and "Honourable" only, it is likewise highly "Pleasant."—"Her ways are ways of pleasantness,"—Pleasantness itself is with her; pure, unmixed, steadfast and satisfying: "all her paths are peace;" even present and eternal peace: "for she is a tree of life, life immortal in the Paradise of God *, to them that lay hold of her, and happy is every one that retaineth her."

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state of probation, and at a distance from our Father's house, so much doth he delight to honour us, that his eternal spirit shall be sent forth to dwell with, to guide and comfort us; and his holy Angels shall become ministers of protection to the children of their heavenly King. And when emancipated from the present scene, the only Begotten shall welcome us to the fulness of joy, where dwells the Father of goodness and of glory, and we shall inherit all those privileges, honours, and blessings, which God hath provided for those who love him!

Tell me now, what earthly Honours can in any degree equal these of the Christian? Do men glory in the greatness of their Birth, and the nobility of their Parents?—Lo! the Father of Christians is great above all greatness, the King of Kings, and Lord of Lords; *And ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord God Almighty.* Do men glory in the favour of their Prince, their access to his person, and his readiness to grant their requests?—Behold we have a free access unto

God the Father, through our Lord Jesus Christ; *Whatsoever*, saith he, *ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you.* We may open our hearts to him in this time of absence, and shall be heard; hereafter we shall see him, as he is; see him and be for ever with him, partaking his goodness, and sharing his love. Do men glory in exalted places or preferments?—But, what are these, even the most exalted, in comparison of that everlasting recompence of reward, that unutterably blessed mansion, which God hath promised, and which Christ is gone before to prepare for us!

As reasonable creatures we cannot but be sensible of the Majesty of God, of our own comparative littleness and imperfections, and consequently of the superlative “Honour” which accrues to us, from our alliance with him, and our permission to adore and serve him. Whence then can it come to pass, that we so often find human creatures ashamed of that, which is their greatest honour, their noblest privilege;—ashamed

of avowing their conscientious regard to the Deity, and the high sense they have or ought to have, of the wondrous mercies which Christ hath procured for them? Were we indeed independant, and could we from our single efforts procure felicity, we might with some shew of reason neglect the dread Lord of the universe; though even then it would be weak, to be insensible to the charms of his goodness, and the greatness of his power. But, on the other side, now that to him we owe every breath of life we draw; now that on his will depends every moment of our continuance in being; now that on his disposal hangs all our present and all our future good; how can we solve the unaccountable delusion? what can we answer to our souls, when we are ashamed of, or for worldly reasons neglect, such a God, with such invaluable privileges?

How differently are we used to act in our temporal concerns! how fond to attain the honours, and to procure the transitory favour of transitory beings like ourselves! If Princes admit us to the least degree of regard, if eminent

nobles and distinguished personages vouchsafe to look upon us with a friendly aspect, how very sensible are we of the honour, and how ready, in general, to declare it too? But when God, the everlasting omnipotent God, whose greatness passeth comprehension, and whose goodness exceedeth all expression and praise; when He humbles himself so far as to invite us to his love; to invite us,—amazing condescension,—even by his only begotten Son! when he encourages us to serve him by promises of the most engaging and interesting nature; when he offers to adopt us into his family, and to give us the glorious inheritance of his children;—we can be insensible to these invitations, these offers, these promises, though we are created only to secure and enjoy them! Nay, and almost blush, in many cases, to be supposed Religious, or to mention with due veneration that NAME, which is above every Name; and which, to creatures like us, should be our highest honour to mention, our truest delight to speak of, the only subject of our praise! So at least thought St. Paul, when he said

*I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ!— God forbid that I should glory, save in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ! And there is good reason, why we should thus glory; why we should not be ashamed of that Gospel; for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth! A small share of reflection, a little use of that Reason which is given us for the noblest purposes, will suffice to make us duly sensible of the exalted “ Honour” which is done to worms like us, by the attention we gain from the God of glory; by the permission we enjoy of approaching his adorable Majesty by prayer, and praise, and all his appointed ordinances. Nor shall we ever be backward to avow our heart’s whole attachment to him, when we remember his awful declaration, *Whosoever is ashamed of me, and of my words, of him will the Son of man also be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father, and of the holy Angels.**

I have dwelt the longer on this topic, as some are apt to represent Religion as a mean and worthless thing; and because others, not duly reflecting on the inestimable privi-

leges to which Christianity entitles them, are backward to express their approbation of that divine scheme of holiness and peace; that evidence of the greatest good-will to man; that instrument, in the hands of the Deity, to invest him with "Honours," as much superior to the honours of this world, as Heaven is to Earth, as Eternity is to Time: Honours bestowed by HIM, who, as St. John expresseth it, *is the Prince of the Kings of the Earth; who hath loved us, and washed us from our sins in his blood, and will make us Kings and Priests unto God and his Father, and we shall reign with him for ever and ever* *!

II. After this, can we doubt of the "Advantages" which will accompany our sincere professions of this dying master's Faith? For what Advantages can be greater, more worthy our unwearied pursuit, than those specified in the preceding passage; the pardon of our sins, the purification of our nature, and the gift of life eternal and

* Revel. i. 5, 6. v. 10.

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full of glory ! Is not the merchandize of these better than of silver, and the gain of them better than of fine gold ? Are they not more precious than rubies, more valuable than the most invaluable of earthly things ? Yea, what of earthly, mortal, and uncertain, can be compared with heavenly, immortal, and immutable ? What is it that men more earnestly covet, than length of days and riches ? Is not the wish of almost every carnal heart, “ Give me wealth, and give me long life, gracious heaven, to enjoy it ! ” — Be Religious, and this blessing is indisputably yours. Your gain shall be a long life, even a life eternal ; and you shall enjoy riches, the never-failing treasures of the celestial kingdom ; treasures which wax not old ; safely stored beyond the reach of spoil or decay ; satisfying, ever-during treasures ! Oh, how unlike the wealth of this world : which is painful in the procural, uncertain and unsatisfying in the possession, and in the end false and deceitful ; sure to forsake and desert, if not to accuse and condemn us !

For such "Advantages" one might well be content to forego a thousand temporary gratifications: and acting upon those principles which actuate the conduct of mankind in general, surely we should not be backward to bear much present labour for the acquisition of so great a future good. The dangers of the ocean and the fatigues of tedious voyages, are borne by the sailor uncomplaining, in hopes he shall at length return to his country, and in a peaceful harbour enjoy the fruits of his toil. Similar reflections might well reconcile us to difficulties and disadvantages, if any such might be supposed to arise merely from our profession of Religion. But few and inconsiderable are the difficulties and disadvantages which arise from thence, and not worthy to be compared with those that proceed from worldly causes, from our own imprudence, vice, and folly. Nay, indeed, such is the Advantage of the Religion of Christ, that it attends us in this world, as well as in the next; and it is our best "Interest" not only respecting futurity, but Time and this life also, to be sincerely Religious.

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The advantages of Time are, in truth, so inferior to those of Eternity, that they scarcely deserve to be named after them ; and it would seem almost to wrong your judgments to imagine that you want any other proof of the real profit of Religion, than the certainty of its procuring pardon of sins, purification of soul, and everlasting blessedness. Yet, to shew the excellence of this divine WISDOM, as well as the goodness of our God, we may remark, and we are authorized in that remark by the inspired penman, “ that Godliness is profitable unto all things ; having the promise of the life which now is, as well as of that which is to come *.” Nay, we are assured by truth infallible, by wisdom essential, that “ if we first seek the kingdom of God and his righteousness, all things necessary to life and well-being shall be added to us †.” If temporal riches and abundance be proper and convenient for us, they shall be given ; if otherwise, the desire of them shall be taken away,

* 1 Tim. iv. 8.

† Mark vi. 33.

and chearful content shall supply the place of abundance. We shall be taught to enjoy what we have with thankfulness and serenity; to resign what we lose with composure and peace: we shall be taught to improve what we possess, to the best advantage; and to make friends, unfailing friends of the mammon of unrighteousness.

Thus Religion is highly profitable, even for this life, as well as for that which is to come: securing to us the best Advantages here, and what is infinitely more important, the best advantages hereafter; advantages real, satisfying, sure, and everlasting. It hurts not, it cannot hurt any of our true and proper interests upon earth; it stimulates industry; it encourages application; it enforces the practice of all the social and moral virtues: it renders us most capable to fulfil those virtues, by correcting our passions, and preserving us from the practice and disquietude of vice: It will procure us the most important advantages in this life; it will enable us to enjoy these advantages, and with the highest PLEA-

SURE: for "her ways are ways of pleasantness," as well as ways of honour and profit.

III. In whatever view we consider Religion, we shall find that it answers the character here given, and affords the purest and highest "Pleasure" we can enjoy in this world. I mean not to insist at present upon the future pleasure which it promises; as that pleasure, exalted indeed, is, we know, utterly unattainable without it.

Now it is a point, in which we all are agreed, that the "Mind" is not only the more noble part of us; but that as it is most capable of pleasure, so are its pleasures infinitely superior to those of the body. For so little gratified is the mind very often found, with mere bodily indulgences, that it disturbs the whole peace of the man who pursues them; and allows him to have neither rest nor satisfaction in the pursuit. But, whether you consider Religion as engaging the "Understanding," or rejoicing the "Conscience," you will find that it affords the "Mind"

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the most complete and substantial satisfaction.

For what objects can the "Understanding" contemplate more great, more new, more interesting, than those which Religion presents! than God, his wonders, and works; his mercy and love! Objects, which may well occupy the mind's whole attention; for the more we contemplate the more we shall love; and the more we love, the happier of course we shall become. And when we reflect, that this is no barren and distant contemplation, which merely amuses, but one that affects our dearest interests; when we recollect that the great God whose glories we contemplate is our Father: that the only begotten Son, whose matchless love we adore with trembling, manifested that love for our sake and for our salvation: that the blessed Spirit, co-equal and co-eternal with the Father and the Son, is our comforter and guide; that He, who spread the blue expanse above us, who spoke, and it was done, who commanded, and all Creation rose into being, is

our shield and our defence, Almighty to save, and ever watchful in goodness to comfort and blefs! When thus we contemplate the great truths of Religion, can the "Understanding" fail to receive the highest pleasure?—If Speculation affords the mind any delight, (and what thinking mind is ignorant of its delights?) the highest, certainly, must be received from the consideration of Religious truths.

But when these truths are carried into practice, and the "Conscience" gives in its favourable evidence, "Oh well is that man, and happy shall he be!" Conscience undoubtedly is the great repository of all those pleasures, which can afford any solid refreshment to the soul: For when this is calm and serene, then properly, but then alone a man enjoys himself: and he must do this, before he can enjoy any thing else. But it is only the practice of sincere Religion which can authorize a man's conscience to speak comfortably to him. It is this which must word the sentence, before the conscience can pronounce it; and then it will do it with

Majesty and authority: it will not whisper, but proclaim a Jubilee to the mind; it will not drop, but pour in oil upon the wounded heart. And is there any pleasure comparable to that, which springs from hence? The pleasures of conscience are not only greater than all other pleasures, but may serve well instead of them: The latter only please and affect the mind in passing, in the pitiful narrow compass of actual enjoyment; they will not bear a retrospect: whereas the pleasure of Conscience entertains, and continually entertains with durable reflections *." Look upon the wretch haunted with a guilty mind, amidst all the affluence of this world; and look upon the Christian rejoicing in the testimony of a good conscience, even in poverty and an afflicted estate; and say, whether the pleasures of Religion are not exquisite and desirable!

I would just remark, That it appears agreeable to every dictate of right reason, and

* See South's Sermons, vol. i.

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the nature of things, that Religion should procure for the soul of man the highest pleasure; and that separate from it no real pleasure should be procured. For if, as we believe, the soul is a ray of the divinity, *breath'd forth* from God *, formed for him, and designed to enjoy him eternally; we may conclude, by the strongest argument, that nothing but God can fill up that soul's desires, and make it completely happy; and that so long as it remains ignorant of God, estranged from, and at enmity with him, so long it must necessarily be unhappy. This reasoning Scripture declares, and long and sad experience hath proved, to be true.

Were we to reflect upon every single instance of duty which we owe to God, we should find that the practice was Pleasure, and the performance the most ample gratification to the mind. But this would carry me into too spacious a field: I must leave it therefore to your own speculation, and, let

* See Genesis, chap. ii. ver. 14.

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me hope, my young friends, to your own experience also; whilst I proceed to observe, that not only from the pleasure it affords "the Understanding," and the comfort it administers to "the Conscience;" but from the happy "restraint it lays upon the passions and appetites," Religion is a source of the highest "Pleasure."

We are all but too well convinced, what evils and inconveniencies, what uneasiness and anxiety have arisen to us, from those corrupt appetites which dwell in our hearts, and fight against our peace. Indeed, what greater evil can befall a man, than a slavery to his passions? What a continual torment are envy and malice, are pride and discontent! How dismal in their consequences the indulgence of lust, and the foul deeds of intemperance! How painful and afflicting the familiarity with any one species of vice! Nay, in truth, let us honestly confess that what of unhappiness or misery we share in this life, at least its far greater portion, hath arisen from our own depraved tempers, passions, and

vices. We cannot doubt then, but that whatever tends to deliver us from the dominion of these, must tend to our highest pleasure. Now the very first step in Christ's Religion is to combat, and the whole business of it is to conquer, these irregular and distressing evils; and to plant in their stead virtues, as amiable in their own nature, and as necessarily productive of true happiness, as the opposite vices are odious and abominable, and productive of unquestionable misery.

In this view therefore, the "ways of WISDOM are ways of pleasantness, and paths of real peace:" It teaches us to love all mankind; to rejoice in their good; to abstain from every defiling practice; to cultivate every excellent virtue. It shews us ourselves, and leads us to that divine humility, which alone would make man blessed. It diffuses a sweet serenity over our souls, and delivers us from all those vexatious terrors, which dwell in the breast, nay, and often murder the whole repose, of vice. It is true—and I remark it with concern,—so

rarely are men in earnest, or at least so very lukewarm in their Religious endeavours, that they enjoy not all the Pleasures which Religion would bestow, because they do not resolutely combat all the passions which are the chief obstacles to their abundant Peace, But let it be observed, that this is no objection to the full pleasantness which Religion offers : Men must blame themselves, if they do not perform the conditions on which that pleasantness is proposed. Hence, or through a partial discharge of duty, the comforts flowing from Religion are frequently unexperienced : and often, many truly deserving persons are deprived of those comforts, through false and severe representations of that gracious system of love and peace, which is calculated to remove every fear of despondency, to dispel every doubt of the penitent and sorrowful, and to diffuse consolation and joy over the believing heart.

I must not conceal it too, as another cause why the pleasures of Religion are often unknown, that it is no uncommon sight to observe men strenuously combating for “ modes

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of faith," and for "peculiar doctrines," which they call, and perhaps think Religion; while they forget the subdual of their evil tempers and vicious passions. Zealous in hearing and talking of the faith, and very warm in their judgments and censures of others, they are not by any means heedful and anxious, as they ought, to improve and amend themselves; and to implant the divine virtues in their hearts: that so they might at once recommend Religion by their own amiable practice, and by the happiness visibly produced by it in their own minds and consciences.

For Religion is a real and internal thing; and such too is happiness; which if it be not found within our own breasts, we shall search for it in vain through the circle of all earthly enjoyments. And there can be no happiness within, but that which arises from an approving conscience and well-regulated affections *. Where

* "He that has Light within his own clear Breast,
May sit i' the Centre and enjoy bright Day:
But he that hides a dark Soul, and foul Thoughts,
Benighted walks under the mid-day Sun;
Himself is his own Dungeon."

MILTON'S COMUS.

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these are, happiness must be found. So that it follows by plain consequence, that pure and undefiled Religion, which gives joy to the conscience, and a right bias to the affections, must give to man the highest and most perfect Pleasure.

But let us advance one step farther, and consider Religion, as it relates to our "Neighbour," as well as to "God" and "Ourselves." Now as the Religion of Christ teaches us to be quiet, peaceable, benevolent, and charitable; to be punctual and honest, diligent and industrious in our proper sphere; not to intermeddle with the concerns of others, but wherever we have an opportunity, to do good and to administer comfort; It evidently teaches us so to live as to secure the greatest serenity, and to avoid the greatest evils which disturb and vex the peace of social life. Indeed the subdual of our corrupt tempers and passions, lays the foundation not only for peace and pleasure in our own minds, but for peace and pleasure in every intercourse of life. For whence, but from pride and malice, from

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envy and censure, from busy curiosity and mean self-love;—whence but from indulged lusts, neglect of our own proper business, from idleness, and the daring transgression of divine and human laws, comes all the evil which oppresses society?—He therefore who lives a stranger to these, who lives in a practice directly contrary, as he is a blessing to others, so doth he treasure up the purest and most peaceful pleasure to himself. Nor can we well conceive a more amiable, —I am sure we cannot form an idea of a happier being—than He, who, steadfast in his love to God, and thankful for the mercies of an atoning Saviour, continually endeavours through the Grace of Christ to combat and conquer all his evil affections; while in his life he shews forth his gratitude to his God and Father, by good-will to his brethren,—to all mankind; diligent in his station, humble in his mind, compassionate to his fellow-creatures; just in his dealings, friendly in his actions, serene and chearful in his whole deportment; glad to promote universal harmony and peace, and to make all participate of that happy “Religion,” which he

himself professes; of that exquisite "Pleasure," which he himself enjoys!

Such are the fruits of true Religion; which deprives of no one rational satisfaction; which forbids no one enjoyment, that a wise or good man would wish to share; nay rather, which heightens every earthly pleasure, and gives the sweetest relish to all those temporal blessings, which the Father of mercy hath graciously provided for his creatures. Tell me then, are not its ways "ways of Peace, and pleasantness?" what hath earth to give, which can be compared to the fruit of this tree of life! a fruit which never satiates, never wearies? Enjoy these pleasures, and you may still enjoy them. They are for ever new, and for ever delightful. This cannot be said of any other satisfactions upon earth: all of these satiate and weary, from the bestial joys of the Epicure and Drunkard, even to the more refined pursuits of Ambition and Honour. The fruit of this tree of life, this matchless pleasure too, is peculiarly your own; it is not in the power of all the world to rob you

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of it: He, who has the property, may be sure of the perpetuity also. But this, again, cannot be said of any outward and mortal enjoyments, each of which are subject to the power of innumerable changes and chances: But nothing can injure the happiness which is centered in our own breasts; no, not even Time itself: It will live with us even beyond the grave!—Indeed it is then, most truly speaking, that this happiness, this peace and pleasure of Religion, shall fully flourish and abound!

Surely after this, there can be no need to exhort you to the practice of this holy Religion, which is thus fraught with consummate pleasure. For if you act consistently, “such pleasure” must draw you to its enjoyment, and make you anxious for its possession!

You, my beloved, who have experienced the “Pleasures” of that Religion, which I have endeavoured to set forth, Oh speak in the important cause, and recommend it to others, from your own happy knowledge.

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In particular recommend it, as truly amiable to the RISING GENERATION; and win by the fair representation, the YOUTH, the flower of our country, to the blessed, the delightful service of the Lord of love. Tell them how agreeable to right reason and your true interest you have ever found the rules and dictates of Religion; Tell them how comfortable and pleasant you have found the exercises of devotion; and with what truth you can say with David, "I had rather be a door-keeper in the house of the Lord, than dwell in the tents of ungodliness." Tell them how sufficient you have found the pleasure of Religion, to overcome the pains and troubles of sense and the world, to take out the sting of them, and to divest them of their terror. Oh tell them of the abundant consolation which true Christianity hath to administer in every trial and affliction! And tell them, that the closer you have kept to the paths of Righteousness, the better progress you have made in Wisdom's ways; the more hath your Pleasure abounded, the more hath your Peace been increased. Tell them, that the sincere and perfect discharge of duty

never brought any thing but solid and substantial joy; and that pain and disquietude are the certain consequence of every deviation from it!—Tell them, what inestimable benefits, what invaluable privileges rejoice your hearts: Peace with God, through Christ; communion with him by the blessed Spirit; freedom from the condemnation of sin; from the fear of death; a thankful, sanctified use of all temporal blessings; the heart at ease, the conscience clear, the animated hope! Tell them of the “Pleasure” high, rational, angelical, debased by no future sad and melancholy reflections; a pleasure, made for the soul, and the soul for it; suitable to its spirituality, and equal to all its capacities: a pleasure, which grows fresher upon enjoyment, which may properly be called our own; liable to no accident, exposed to no injury, the foretaste of Heaven, and the earnest of a blessed Eternity!

And will not this representation engage you, “my young hearers,” early and diligently to cultivate the knowledge of that divine Religion, which will procure you

such invaluable PLEASURE? Pleasure is the aim and wish of your age. Behold none is so pure, none is so perfect, none will improve so much; nay, all will satiate, will disgust and weary, except the divine and god-like pleasure, which springs from piety and virtue. Oh “get these,—for their price is above rubies;—and happy shall you be!” happy in the favour of your God, happy in the love of your Redeemer; happy in the peace and serenity of your minds; happy in the tender and endearing affection of your parents; happy in the esteem of your friends; happy shall you be in yourselves, and happy shall you make all those connected with you. Therefore, “above all things get WISDOM, and with all your getting get understanding. Exalt her, and she shall promote thee: she shall bring thee to honour, when thou dost embrace her; she shall give to thy head an ornament of grace, a crown of glory shall she deliver to thee. She is a tree of life to them that lay hold of her, and happy is every one that retaineth her.”

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Such are the PLEASURES which RELIGION offers: how different, my young friends, from those sordid, unsatisfying sensual pursuits, which have heretofore passed under our examination * !—But who would put in competition the joys of brutes, and the delights of Angels!—Religion presents the latter; sensuality and sin the former. 'Tis yours to make the choice; and on that choice depends your everlasting fate. The infinite goodness of God proposes the most perfect pleasure here and hereafter to you. You cannot be unhappy, if you serve Him with all your soul. If you neglect to do so, whatever your state and condition, high or low, rich or poor; whatever your earthly acquisitions or wants, you cannot in the nature of things be truly happy. Your mind will for ever be restless; for it wants its proper good; and without that good, it must be restless and miserable for ever!

Make then, I intreat you,—as my last, best and parting counsel,—make a wise choice, my dear young friends! Love the Lord, and

* See vol. ii.

he will love you *; cleave early to Him, and he will never forsake you. The more you advance in the ways of truth and virtue, the more perfect and undefiled will your satisfactions prove, and the greater relish will you have of those real and rational “Pleasures,” which these sincere endeavours of mine have recommended (let me hope and pray not without effect) to your complete enjoyment.

And “Oh ye careful PARENTS:—for I cannot conclude without once more addressing you; addressing you first † and last, as so much of the welfare of our youth, of the rising generation, depends upon you;—Ye careful worthy Parents, watchful for the welfare of your darling offspring, solicitous for their happiness, and anxious to secure their peace and pleasure; See, where these blessings may assuredly be found; and with unremitting diligence form the young mind to the love of Religion, and to the prac-

* See Proverbs, chap. viii. ver. 17, and the first Discourse.

† See the latter end of the first Sermon.

tice of those amiable duties, which JESUS CHRIST hath enjoined. Guard them from the dangerous and delusive ruin of subtle, fashionable, and insinuating Infidelity: from the weak and wild absurdities of staring impetuous Enthusiasm. And to that end, draw them by the cords of simple Truth and plain Reason to the love of God, of duty, and of virtue. Teach them the eternal, the unalterable difference between these and vice; and convince them how much it is their Interest, their Happiness, their Honour, respecting both Time and Eternity, to obey the Gospel of Christ; that is, to live as becomes Men. You will reap the pleasing profit of such instructions, in the obedience and the felicity of your children; and laying, by a right a wise and Religious EDUCATION, the solid basis of their future good, you will have no cause to lament, with numbers of those who fatally omit this prime duty in our luxurious dissipated days;—No cause to lament with them, the neglect of Parental Love, and the heart-piercing anguish of Filial Ingratitude and Unkindness. *Which, &c.*

END OF THE SERMONS.

ANECDOTES ON RELIGION.

(1.) A young lady being asked, by a friend, the important question, "What is Religion?" it produced the following definition, which we insert in justice to the fair Author.

"Religion is a generous lively flame,
That brightens, not deforms the human frame;
In the close covert of the heart it lies,
Beams there, nor sternly threatens in the eyes.
An unaffected ease its actions' grace,
Known by the motions of the Soul, not Face.
No sour restraint, no forc'd concern it wears,
No bidden sighs, no ostentatious tears.
No self-applauding shrugs; no censure, strife,
Nor spleen, at all the blameless joys of life;
As wide from these are Virtue's native charms,
As settled Courage from confus'd alarms;
As solid Reason's calm considerate train
From the wild phrenzies of a feverish brain."

(2.) "It is found by experience, says Dean Swift, That those men who set up for Morality, without regard to Religion, are generally virtuous but in part: They will be just in their dealings between man and man,

but if they find themselves disposed to pride, lust, intemperance, or avarice, they do not think their morality concerned to check them in any of these vices; because it is the great rule of such men, that they may lawfully follow the dictates of nature, wherever their safety, honour and fortune are not injured. So that upon the whole, there is hardly one vice, which a mere moral man may not upon some occasions allow himself to practise. This may serve to shew the weakness and uncertainty of that false principle, "moral honesty," which many people set up in the place of conscience, for a guide to their actions." See his Works, vol. xi. p. 204.

(3.) When Protagoras the sceptick, whose strange caprices led him to doubt of every thing, even though he saw or felt it, began his book by saying, "As for the Gods, whether they are or are not, I have nothing to say;" the magistrates of Athens highly resented this profane trifling with things sacred, banished him out of their city, and con-

demned his book to be burnt by the common executioner. And afterwards, when he and his friend Pyrrho were asked, why they walked so much alone, they answered, "It was to meditate how they might be good." And being hereupon further asked, what necessity there was for being good, if it were certain that there is no God; they replied, "It cannot be ascertained that there is no God; and therefore it is prudence to provide for the worst."

(4.) Epicurus, disdaining the absurd notion of a multitude of Gods and Goddesses, and detesting that account of them which mankind had taken up gratis, from the Poets and other fabulous writers; set his philosophising wit to work to give an account of the beginning and continuance of all things in nature, without the admission of a Deity. Accordingly, he advances a supposition still more phantastical if possible, than all which had gone before; namely, that the world derived its origin from a fortunate confluence of infinite particles of matter, which he

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called Atoms; and this he affirms with a degree of confidence greater than one could have expected on so ludicrous a subject. Yet after all he leaves his scholars to labour under insuperable difficulties about the eternity, the shapes, the first mover of his atoms, and the production of creatures endowed with sense and understanding out of those insensible parts; with many other forcible objections, which utterly invalidate this cobweb hypothesis. His great admirer, Lucretius, however highly commends this philosophical chimæra, and extols its author; but in such daring terms, as will brand and stigmatize him in the opinion of all sober men to the end of the world: For he celebrates Epicurus as the first that dared to encounter the notion of a Deity, and had thereby set the minds of men free from the fear of God, which had so long kept them in awe. And yet we are assured by Cotta, “ That so far was he from gaining his beloved ease and pleasure hereby, that no school-boy was ever more afraid of a rod, than Epicurus was of death and a Deity,” though in words he seemed to de-

spise both. " So hard is it (as the learned Bishop Stillingfleet observes) for an Epicurean, even after he hath prostituted his conscience, to silence it: but, whatever there be in the air, there is certainly an elastical power in the Conscience, that will bear itself up, notwithstanding the weight that is laid upon it, to stifle and kill its clamours."

(5.) What a blessing to mankind was the ingenuous, humble, and pious Mr. Boyle! what a common pest was the fallacious, proud, and impious Hobbes! Accordingly we find that the former bad adieu to the world with the utmost serenity, honour, and hope; while the latter went out of it in the dark, and with terrible apprehensions of an unknown Future. He had been an instrument of the prince of darkness, in poisoning many young gentlemen and others, with his wicked principles, as the Earl of Rochester confessed with extreme compunction and grief upon his death bed. It is remarked by those who critically observed the Author of the "Leviathan," that though in a hu-

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mour of bravado, he would speak very strange and unbecoming things of God; yet in his study, in the dark, and in his retired thoughts, he trembled before him. Many appear like Atheists in their mirth, amidst wine and company, who are quite of other sentiments in sickness, and gloom, and solitude. What could make this strange man awake in such terror and amazement if his candle happened to go out in the night? What, but that he was unable to bear the dismal reflections of his dark and desolate mind; and knew not how to extinguish, nor how to bear the light of "the candle of the Lord" within him!

+ (6.) Dr. Doddridge, in his Life of that memorable convert, Colonel Gardiner, informs us, "That his fine constitution, than which perhaps there was hardly ever a better, gave him great opportunities of indulging himself in excesses; and his good spirits enabled him to pursue his pleasures of every kind, in so alert and sprightly a manner, that multitudes envied him, and called him by a dreadful kind of compliment, "the

happy Rake." Yet still the checks of conscience, and some remaining principles of so good an education as he had received, would break in upon his most licentious hours; and I particularly remember he told me, that when some of his dissolute companions were once congratulating him on his distinguished felicity, a dog happening at that time to come into the room, he could not forbear groaning inwardly, and saying to himself, "Oh that I were that dog!" Such was then his happiness; and such perhaps is that of hundreds more, who bear themselves highest in the contempt of Religion, and glory in that infamous servitude which they call Liberty." See the Life, p. 23. +

(7.) It is owing to the forbidding and unlovely constraint with which men of low conceptions act, when they think they conform themselves to Religion; as well as to the more odious conduct of hypocrites, that the word "Christian," does not carry with it, at first view, all that is great, worthy, friendly, generous, and heroick. The man

who suspends his hopes of the reward of worthy actions till after death; who can charitably bestow unseen; who can overlook hatred; who can do good to his slanderer; who can never be angry at his friend, never revengeful to his enemy; is certainly formed for the benefit of society. Yet these are so far from heroic virtues, that they are but the ordinary duties of a Christian.

(8.) Mr. Locke somewhere observes, "That morality becomes a gentleman, not barely as a man, but in order to his business as a Gentleman; and the morality of the Gospel, says he, doth so excel that of all other books, that to give a man a full knowledge of true morality, I should send him to no other book than the New Testament."

(9.) Xenophon informs us, that Cyrus, before all other things preferred the worship of the Gods, and a respect for Religion. Upon this head therefore he thought himself obliged to bestow his first and peculiar care. He accordingly began by establishing a number

of Magi or Priests, to sing daily a morning service of praise to the honour of the Gods, and to offer sacrifices; which was daily practised among the Persians of succeeding ages. The Prince's disposition quickly became, as is usual, the prevailing disposition among the People, and his example became the rule of their conduct *. Cyrus, on the other hand, was extremely glad to find in them such sentiments of Religion; being convinced that whosoever sincerely fears and worships God, will at the same time be faithful to his King, and preserve an inviolable attachment to his person, and to the welfare of the state.

(10.) Antralcidas, a Spartan, being about to enter into holy orders, was asked by the Priest, what action worthy of renown he had performed during his life. He replied, "If I have performed any, the Gods themselves are acquainted with it." How noble an instance of modesty! how exalted a notion of the Deity! Surely, nothing can be

* "Regis ad exemplum totus componitur orbis."

more foolish, than to imagine by the ostentation of our actions to recommend ourselves to that Deity, who, of whatever nature those actions may be, must have the clearest knowledge of their quality and worth.

(11.) Anaximenes being asked how he could so calmly pursue his studies, confined as he was to a prison, and expecting death; answered, " That his soul was not confined, having as large a walk as the Heavens which he studied; nor frightened, having an hope as great as the Immortality which he looked for."

(12.) During the retreat of the famous King Alfred, at Athelney in Somersetshire, after the defeat of his forces by the Danes, the following circumstance happened, which, while it convinces us of the extremities to which that great man was reduced, will give us a striking proof of his pious and benevolent disposition. A beggar came to his little castle there, and requested alms;

when his Queen informed him " that they had only one small loaf remaining, which was insufficient for themselves and their friends, who were gone abroad in quest of food, though with little hopes of success. The King replied, " Give the poor Christian one half of the loaf. He that could feed 5000 men with five loaves and two fishes, can certainly make that half of the loaf suffice for more than our necessities." Accordingly the poor man was relieved, and this noble act of charity soon recompensed by a providential store of fresh provisions, with which his people returned.

(13.) Of all the singular virtues which united in the character of Gustavus Adolphus of Sweden, That which crowned the whole was his exemplary piety to God: The following is related of him, when he was once in his camp before Werben. He had been alone in the cabinet of his pavilion some hours together, and none of his attendants at these seasons durst interrupt him. At length however, a favourite of his having

some important matter to tell him, came softly to the door, and looking in beheld the King very devoutly on his knees at prayer. Fearing to molest him in that sacred exercise, he was about to withdraw his head, when the King espied him, and bidding him come in, said, "Thou wonderest to see me in this posture, since I have so many thousands of subjects to pray for me: But I tell thee, that no man has more need to pray for himself, than He, who being to render an account of his actions to none but God, is for that reason more closely assaulted by the Devil than all other men beside."

(14.) Eusebius in his History informs us, That St. John, during his ministration to the Western Churches, cast his eye upon a young man remarkable for the extent of his knowledge, and the ingenuoufness of his mind. The aged Apostle thought that he had discovered in him an useful instrument for the propagating of Christianity: accordingly he took particular pains to convert him, and to instruct him in the divine doctrines

of his great master; and that he might be still better acquainted with the system of Christianity, at his departure he recommended him to the care of a pious old father, who had some authority in the infant Church. The youth continued awhile in the duties of his new profession, and attended with care to the lectures of his venerable tutor. But his former associates, when they found themselves deserted by him, were grieved at the success of the Apostle, and exerted their utmost efforts to regain so useful and entertaining a companion. They succeeded in their attempts: the Father was forsaken, and his pupil plunged deep into irregularity and vice. The Apostle after some time returned to those parts; and "where," said he, with impatience to his aged friend, "where is my favourite youth?"—"Alas!" replied the good old man, with tears in his eyes, "he is fallen, irrecoverably fallen: he has forsaken the society of saints, and is now a leader of a gang of robbers in the neighbouring mountains." Upon hearing this unexpected and unpleasing account, the Apostle forgot

his sufferings and his years, and hastened to the place of rendezvous; where, being seized by one of the band, he desired to speak with their Captain. The Captain being told that a strange pilgrim asked to be admitted to him, ordered him to be brought before him: but when he beheld the venerable Apostle, his hopes of amusement sunk, and were changed into shame and confusion; and the hardy leader of a band of robbers, trembled before a poor and helpless old man. He quitted once more the society of wickedness, and lived and died in the service of his Redeemer.

(15.) The following allegorical "Picture of Ingratitude in a poor Dependant," was drawn by a lady a few years since, and is so suitable to the point in hand, that we make no apology for its length. The reader will readily discover its application to man in general, and his spiritual concerns. "A certain great person was of so noble and generous a disposition, that he delighted to communicate happiness to all around him. Among those whom his bounty raised, we will dis-

tinguish one by the name of Orlando. This man he took from a condition low as the mire in the streets, clothed him and fed him, placed him in a convenient habitation, and bestowed upon him an ample provision to support life with comfort and satisfaction; and as he lived in a country where assaults and many accidents were frequent, this kind benefactor used often to send a party of his own servants (for he kept vast numbers in his retinue) to guard him, particularly whenever he went on any dangerous expedition. When he was sick, or in any affliction, he never failed to visit him, to administer relief and comfort to him: There was not a day, in short, in which he did not confer upon him some new obligation; and as if all this was too little, He faithfully promised him, that if he did not make an ill use of the favours he had already received, He would, after trying him a while in his present circumstances, bestow on him a much greater estate, situated in a most delightful country, where he should live in an elegance and splendor he had then no conception of: and in return for all these

mighty obligations, his patron only expected that he should pay him frequent visits; sometimes in publick, along with other company, who attended his levee, but more frequently in private: That he should behave himself in a sober orderly manner, neither hurting himself by being guilty of any excesses, nor setting an ill example to others. He also made him steward of some small part of his revenue, which he ordered him to distribute according to his own discretion, among a set of his lower dependents, and assured him that if he discharged this office with diligence and humanity, he should look on it as a favour done to himself.

And now, would one think it possible that Orlando should in a little time grow negligent and forgetful of this noble friend? That when he was absent from him, he should engross but little of his thoughts, and still less of his conversation?— that if by chance he was led to talk of him, he should presently fly off from the subject, as if he was ashamed to mention the person to whom he owed his ALL. Nay, could one believe that

he would even listen with a patient ear, while others spoke disrespectfully of him, and found fault with his acts of bounty, because they were not distributed exactly in that manner which they thought best? He visited him sometimes, it's true, but his visits were short and not frequent; and his behaviour such as plainly shewed that he went because it was expected from him, or out of custom, more than from any real veneration or love to his benefactor. If he asked a favour, either for himself or any body else, he did it with such a careless air, as if he did not much trouble his head whether it was granted or not—sometimes he would make professions of gratitude, but with so much coolness and indifference, as shewed he was very little sensible of the obligations he had received. All who attended on public days were expected to behave with great decorum and gravity, for on these occasions the least degree of levity was looked upon as a breach of respect to their patron; but Orlando was so far from observing those rules, that he used frequently to be talking and laughing with some of the company, and even in the middle of an

address to his friend, he would break off, to take notice of somebody's new suit of clothes, or any other such trifle that happened to catch his eye.

But there was one part of his behaviour more unpardonable than any of the rest, which was his neglect of those persons whom his generous benefactor had entrusted to his care : he seldom visited them, never troubled his head to enquire into their wants, nay, would hardly grant them a small favour when they solicited him. After going on for some time in this manner, if either the admonitions of a friend, or the consciousness of his own mind awakened him to a sense of his ingratitude, he would then vouchsafe to make some acknowledgments, and to ask his patron's pardon in a supplicating manner ; when this inimitable friend, not to be tired out with any provocations, would receive him with open arms, and assure him that if he would be more careful to please him for the future, all that was past should be buried in oblivion ; but that if he persisted to abuse his kindness, he would (if he did not withdraw his present

bounty) yet certainly disinherit him of the noble estate he had in reversion, which was not to be given him till he had undergone a severe operation, which had so much of fancied terror in it, as made him very willing to keep what he then enjoyed, without looking out for any thing better. But this was not permitted him; for at the expiration of a certain term of years, he was either to be put in possession of the promised inheritance, or else to be punished for not having deserved it.

Again and again he offended, and yet, such was the forgiving goodness of his benefactor, that upon his humbling himself he as often received him to favour; till at last he sent his grim messenger to acquaint him, that the appointed hour was come, the lease of his house was expired, and he must prepare to enter a new habitation. Though at first he expressed some reluctance, yet the sentence was immediately executed:—But whether he arrived at the delightful country that was promised, or whether he suffered for the folly and carelessness of his past life, is a question

yet unresolved. However, thus much is certain, that when he was just going to make trial of so great a change, he heartily wished he had made it the business of every day of his life to please his noble friend." See the *Christian's Magazine*, vol. iii. p. 512.

(16.) An excellent critick introduces a libertine speaking in these terms, "When the physician is near my bed, my confessor is my comforter; I know very well how to hinder Religion from afflicting me when I am well; but I permit her to console me when I am sick. When I have no longer any thing to hope on one hand, Religion presents herself, and gains me over by her promises; I then wish earnestly to give myself up to her, and to die on the side of hope." How many a libertine might we enumerate, who apparently reasons in this manner, thus egregiously deludes himself, and is the dupe of his own licentiousness. And how aptly might we address to such self-deceivers those singular lines, which, alas! do but too sensibly reach them!

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“ When the Devil was sick, the Devil a Monk
would be ;
When the Devil was well, the devil a Monk
was he !”

(17.) While the colleagues of Constantius the Roman Emperor were persecuting the Christians with fire and sword, he politically pretended to persecute them too; and declared to such officers of his household and governors of provinces as were Christians, that he left it to their choice, either to sacrifice to the Gods, and by that means preserve themselves in their employments, or to forfeit their places and his favour by continuing steady in their Religion. When they had all declared their option, the Emperor discovered his real sentiments; reproached in the most bitter terms those who had renounced their Religion; highly extolled the virtue and constancy of such as had despised the wealth and vanities of the world; and dismissed the former with ignominy, saying, “ That those who had betrayed their GOD, would not scruple to

betray their Prince;” while he retained the latter, trusted them with the guard of his person, and the whole management of publick affairs, as persons on whose fidelity he could firmly rely, and in whom he might put an entire confidence.

+ (18.) Notwithstanding our modern scepticks and infidels are great pretenders to Reason and Philosophy, and are willing to have it thought that none who are really possessed of those talents can easily assent to the truth of Christianity; yet we see it falls out, very unfortunately for them and their cause, that those persons, who are confessed to have been the most perfect Reasoners of their time, are also known to have been firm Believers. Were it necessary to be more particular on this head, we might mention other examples of the greatest and best Philosophers of every age, who have always been the most devout men. Far from being puffed up with the pride of human learning, or ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, they have made it their glory, and acknowledged it to contain the

only infallible rules of their conduct in this life, and the only foundation of their hope in that which is to come. It is said of the great Sir Isaac Newton, that tho' he entered further into the depths of philosophy than ever mortal did before him, yet he accounted the Scriptures of God to be the most sublime philosophy; and never mentioned his Creator's Name without an awful pause of adoration, wonder and self-abasement!

(19.) It was the daily practice of that eminent physician, Dr. Boerhaave, throughout his whole life, as soon as he arose in the morning (which was generally very early) to retire for an hour to private prayer and meditation on some part of the Scriptures. He often told his friends, when they asked him how it was possible for him to go through so much fatigue, "That it was this which gave him spirit and vigour in the business of the day." This therefore he recommended as the best rule he could give; "For, nothing," he said, "could tend more to the health of the body, than the tranquillity of the

mind; and that he knew nothing which could support himself or his fellow-creatures, amidst the various distresses of life, but a well grounded confidence in the Supreme Being, upon the principles of Christianity." This remark of the Doctor's is undeniably just. A benevolent manner of acting, and a true greatness of soul, can never flow from any other source than a consciousness of the Divine favour and assistance.

(20.) The Emperor Charles V. declared, " That he found more satisfaction, more content in his Monastick solitude, and exercises of devotion, than all the victories, and all the triumphs of his past life had ever afforded him, though they made him esteemed as the most fortunate of Princes."

(21.) Bishop Burnet, in his Sermon on the funeral of the honourable Mr. Boyle, says of that excellent man; " He had the profoundest veneration for the great God of Heaven and Earth that I ever observed in any man. The very Name of God was never mentioned

by him without a pause and visible stop in his discourse." And elsewhere he observes, "It appears from those who conversed with him on his inquiries into nature, that his main design in that (on which, as he had his own eye most constantly, so he took care to put others often in mind of it) was to raise in himself and others, higher ideas of the greatness and glory, of the wisdom and goodness of God. This was so deep in his thoughts, that he concludes the article of his Will, which relates to the Royal Society, in these words.—"Wishing them an happy success in their laudable attempts to discover the true nature of the works of God; and praying that they and all other searchers into physical truths may cordially refer their attainments to the glory of the great Author of nature, and the comfort of mankind."

(22.) Wicked men act very differently from this right honourable, this Christian Philosopher; they bury their souls in their bodies, and all their projects and designs are bounded within the compass of the earth

they tread on. Hence it was the opinion of the Academick philosophers, that the Souls of wicked men after their death, could not for a long season depart from the graves and charnels, where their mates, the Bodies, lay buried; but there wandered up and down in a desolate manner, as not being able to leave those bodies, to which they were so much wedded in this transient life,

+ (23.) Mr. Locke, in a letter written the year before his death to one who asked him “What is the shortest and surest way for a young gentleman to attain to the true knowledge of the Christian Religion?”—gives this memorable reply, “Let him study the Holy Scriptures; especially the New Testament; therein are contained the words of eternal life. It has God for its author; salvation for its end; and truth, without any mixture of error, for its matter.”—A direction, which he copied from his own practice in the latter part of his life, and after his retirement from business: when, for fourteen or fifteen years, he applied himself especially to the

study of the inspired writings, and employed the last years of his life hardly in any thing else. He was never weary of admiring the great views of that sacred Book, and the just relation of all its parts; every day making discoveries in it, which gave him fresh cause of admiration. Of this his Reasonableness of Christianity, and "Commentaries on St. Paul's Epistles," are sufficient evidence. The death of this great man was agreeable to his life. We are assured by one who was with him when he died, and who had lived in the same family for seven years before, "That the day before his death, he particularly exhorted all about him to read the Holy Scriptures, and desired to be remembered by them at evening prayers. On being told that if he chose it the whole family should come and pray by him in his chamber, he answered, he should be very glad to have it so, if it would not give too much trouble; and, an occasion offering to speak of the goodness of God, he especially exalted the care which God shewed to man, in justifying him by Faith in Jesus Christ; and concluded with returning God thanks, in particular, for hav-

ing blessed him with the knowledge of that divine Saviour." About two months before his death, he drew up a letter to a certain gentleman, and left this direction upon it, " To be delivered to him after my decease;" In which are these remarkable words, " I know you loved me living, and will preserve my memory now I am dead. This life is a scene of vanity that soon passes away, and affords no solid satisfaction, but in the consciousness of doing well, and in the hopes of another life. This is what I can say upon experience, and what you will find to be true, when you come to make up the account. Adieu!" See his *Posthumous Works*, p. 21. and 328. and the *Preface to my Commentary on the Bible*.

(24.) Mr. Addison (as we learn from the late celebrated Dr. Young's *Tract on Original Composition*) after a long and manly, but fruitless struggle with the distemper of which he died, dismissed his physicians, and with them all hopes of life. He dismissed not however his concern for the living; but sent for a youth nearly related to him, and finely

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accomplished, yet not above being the better for good impressions from a dying friend. He came; but life now glimmering in the socket, the dying friend was silent. After a decent and proper pause, the youth said, "Dear Sir, you sent for me; I believe, and I hope that you have some commands; I shall hold them most sacred." May distant ages not only hear but feel the reply! Forcibly grasping the young gentleman's hand, he softly said, "See in what peace a Christian can die!" He spoke with difficulty, and soon expired. Through Divine Grace, how great is man, through Divine Mercy, how stingless is death!—Who would not thus expire!

(25.) It was a saying of Aristotle's respecting Virtue, which we may well apply to Religion, That it is necessary to the young, To the aged comfortable, To the poor wealth, To the rich an ornament, To the fortunate an honour, To the wretched a support. That it ennobles the slave, and exalts nobility itself.

"Such blessings ever wait on virtuous deeds,
And though a late, a sure reward succeeds."

(26.) Louis the late Duke of Orleans thus expressed the delight he found in piety and devotion: "I know by experience, that sublunary grandeur and sublunary pleasure are deceitful and vain, and are always infinitely below the conceptions we form of them. But on the contrary, such happiness and such complacency may be found in devotion and piety, as the sensual mind has no idea of."

(27.) Cardinal Wolsey, one of the greatest ministers of state that ever was, poured forth his soul in these words, after his fall from the favour of Henry VIII. "Had I but been as diligent to serve my God, as I have been to please my king, he would not have forsaken me now, in my grey hairs."

(28.) We cannot perhaps close this work more forcibly, than with the following striking circumstance respecting M. de Voltaire; a man, who after having long, and too justly, been considered as the patron of infidelity; and after having shewn himself equally the enemy of every Religious establishment;

has at length, to the astonishment of all serious minds, and at the close of a long life, of near eighty years, in the most solemn manner given the confession of his Faith subjoined; and which is confirmed on the oath of several witnesses who were present.—“ I believe firmly, says he, all that the catholick, apostolick, and Roman Church believes and confesses. I believe in one God, in three persons, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, really distinguished; having the same nature, the same divinity, and the same power. That the second person was made man, called Jesus Christ; who died for the salvation of all men; who has established the Holy Church, to which it belongs to judge of the true sense of the Holy Scriptures. I condemn likewise all the heresies the said Church has condemned and rejected; likewise all perverted misinterpretations which may be put on them. This true and Catholick Faith, out of which none can be saved, I profess and acknowledge to be the only true one; and I swear, promise, and engage myself to die in this Belief by the Grace of God.

I believe and acknowledge also, with a perfect Faith, all, and every one of the articles of the Apostles' Creed." [which he recited in Latin very distinctly] "I declare, moreover, that I have made this confession before the reverend Father Capuchin, previous to his confessing me." If a Veteran in the cause of Infidelity thus closes his life and his works: does it not greatly behove those who have been deluded or misled by his writings, seriously to look to themselves; and bring home this striking example to their hearts, lest they fall into the condemnation which their master seeks thus meanly, at the end, to avoid?—See the genuine letters between him and the Archbishop of Anneci, lately published, p. 45, &c.



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